

The Sikh History of East India



Abinash Mahapatra

THE SIKH HISTORY OF EAST INDIA

(A Compilation of 8 books on Sikh History written with
profound research & authenticity)

Abinash Mahapatra

Prefaced by

Sardar Ravinder Singh Asha Singh Bungai

*(Hon. Secretary of Gurdwara Board, Takhat Sachkhand Sri Hazur
Abchalnagar Sahib, Nanded)*

&

Sardar Gurbax Singh Khalsa

*(Junior Vice President, Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee
(S.G.P.C.), Sri Amritsar Sahib)*

Held in High Regards by

Mrs. Ekta Sherawat

*(Hon. Secretary of Committee of Parliament on Official Language,
Ministry of Home Affairs, Govt. of India)*



Publication Beaureau

Punjabi Global Foundation, Odisha Chapter.



*Countless clouds do race to hide You, of wealth, fame & civilization
And yet through mist of tears I see appear Your Golden Name
Each time my family and dear, do loudly claim they did me tend
I wake from sleep to sweetly hear that You alone do help me here....*

Abi...



**PUNJABI GLOBAL FOUNDATION
(ODISHA CHAPTER)**

The Punjabi Global Foundation is founded by Hon. Gurpreet Kaur Chadha and other eminent members in the state of Maharashtra who have been guide and teachers in their own aspects. The main objective of this organization is to promote the rich cultural heritage of Sikh Religion and the state of Punjab on national and international horizon among the youth and new generations following the basic tenant of Satguru Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji i.e., “Sarbat ka Bhalla” (Wellbeing for All).

The Odisha Chapter of Punjabi Global Foundation came into effect on 1st of July, 2020 with Mr. Abinash Mahapatra (Sikh Historian & Author) as the appointed President. Within a span of few months and in the midst of Covid Pandemic, the astounding activities of this organization has led it to be recognized by the Govt. of Odisha, various Sikh Authorities as well as Takhat Sahiban.

Title of the Book

The Sikh History of East India

The Author

Mr. Abinash Mahapatra

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SATGURU SRI GURU NANAK DEV JI MAHARAJ



ਸ.ਰਵਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ
ਆਸ਼ਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬੁੰਗਈ
 ਸਕੱਤਰ
 ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਬੋਰਡ ਤਖਤ ਸਚਖੰਡ ਸ੍ਰੀ
 ਹਜ਼ੂਰ ਅਬਚਲਨਗਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨਾਂਦੇੜ-੪੩੧੬੦੧



S.Ravinder Singh
Asha Singh Bungai
SECRETARY
 Gurdwara Board Takhat Sachkhand Sri
 Hazur Abchalnagar Sahib Nanded-431 601

Ref.No. *Secretary* /46/2021

Date : 07/01/2021

Since the past 500 years, the Sikhs across the globe possess a profound relationship with the East India. This portion of the country was visited by the Pehli Patshah Satguru Sri Guru Nanak Sahib Ji Maharaj who travelled across all the states of this province and recited the Sikh Aarti in Jagannath Puri. Subsequently, it was Nauwey Patshah Satguru Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Maharaj a vast history of which is prevailing in the states of Assam and Bihar. Dasam Patshah Sahib Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj was born in Patna Sahib and the place where He was born has been transformed to Takhat Sri Harimandar Ji Patna Sahib, constructed by Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Kalgidhar Patshah has also referred to the province of East India in "Sri Dasam Granth Sahib Ji" under the chapter of "Bachittar Natak".

A scholar in Sikh History and the youngest author, Mr. Abinash Mahapatra is a profound & contemplative individual who has been a deep thinker right from his infantile days. He is rarest among those souls whose multifaceted personality cannot be ignored by one and all. His educative values are deeply rooted which is enriched and strengthen at every level and stages of his life. Being young and dynamic, he is adorned with a serene and pleasing personality and has a maturity level surpassing his tender young age. Simplicity, humbleness and saintliness are the keywords to describe this dignified soul. His attitude, his strictness and boldness are far apart to be compared to other individuals of his age.

Being a voracious reader of Sikh Literatures and a recognised Sikh History Research Scholar, Mr. Abinash has taken a profound journey to explore the unexplored portion of Sikh History which has remain concealed since the past many years from the mankind. The book "The Sikh History of East India" is a master piece in the world of Sikh Literature which reflects on the author's relentless hard work to bring into light the unspoken history of our Guru Sahiban, their travels & the ideals they preached in the Eastern States of India. This book is an authentic research work and the author's hard work should be highly praised and noted therein.

It is indeed appreciable that the young author has put his utmost efforts and sources to go into these hidden details and might have come across lots of hurdles for accomplishing these great works. One more book of the author entitled "The Sikh History of Deccan India" has also been prefaced by Singh Sahib Gyani Kulwant Singh Ji (Jathedar, Sachkhand Sri Hazur Abchal Nagar Sahib) on the 400th Birth Anniversary of Nauwey Patshah Sahib Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Maharaj. May the author continue to produce such literatures & keep unearthing the uncharted portion of Sikh History, further in his lifetime.

S. Ravinder Singh Bungai
 (Secretary)



M. 9888118111



M. 98140-44302

**ਗੁਰਬਖਸ਼ ਸਿੰਘ ਖਾਲਸਾ****Gurbax Singh Khalsa**

ਮੀਤ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਸ਼੍ਰੋ: ਗੁ: ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ
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Vice President S.G.P.C. Sri Amritsar
Resi. :
H. No. B-1/122, Moh. Gobindgarh Nawanshahr

Ref No.

Dated..15/11/2020

Mr. Abinash Mahapatra,
(Sikh Historian & Author)

President – Punjabi Global Foundation (Odisha Chapter)
President – Legal Cell, Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee Bihar.

Dear Mr. Mahapatra,

Waheguru Ji ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji ki Fateh

The books authored by you entitled “The Sikh History of East India” & “The Sikh History of Deccan India” are well-researched and valuable literatures on the Sikh History which encompass a chronological sequence from the visit of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and other Sikh Gurus to the establishment of Khalsa Raj in the Eastern as well as Deccan states of India. These two books have been verified by Takhat Sachkhand Sri Hazur Abchalnagar Sahib, Nanded in which you have portrayed each and every aspect of the Sikh History in such a profound manner that one can easily realise the universalism of Sikh Religion.

Your dedication and attachment towards the Sikh Religion at your present age of twenty-two years can be defined as a blessing. In all your works of Sikh History you have reflected the most important fact that the Sikh Religion is disillusioned by the social inequities and religious hypocrisies and brings forth the fact that is only the Supreme Lord “Waheguru Ji” who has created the entire world and is not watching all of us from a distance, rather He is fully present in every aspect of His creation and hence all people are equally divine for which they deserve to be treated as such, thus serving the mankind is a natural expression of worship.

You have given a clear concept in your books that to promote the vision of divine oneness and social equality, the first Sikh Guru Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji took four Spiritual Journeys (Udasis) thus rejecting all social distinctions that produce inequities, including gender, race, religion and caste, the predominant structure for social hierarchy in South Asia and these principles were propagated by the succeeding nine Sikh Gurus and the Gur Sikhs who attained Martyrdom, thus leading to the formation of Khalsa Panth and establishment of the Khalsa Raj all across the globe.

For all the noble deeds that you have performed till date, I whole heartedly extend my appreciations and pray Waheguru Ji to bestow upon you with strength and courage to continue such research works on Sikh History according to the Gurmat Philosophy.

Gurbax Singh Khalsa

(Junior Vice President)



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दिनांक / Dated 11 जनवरी 21

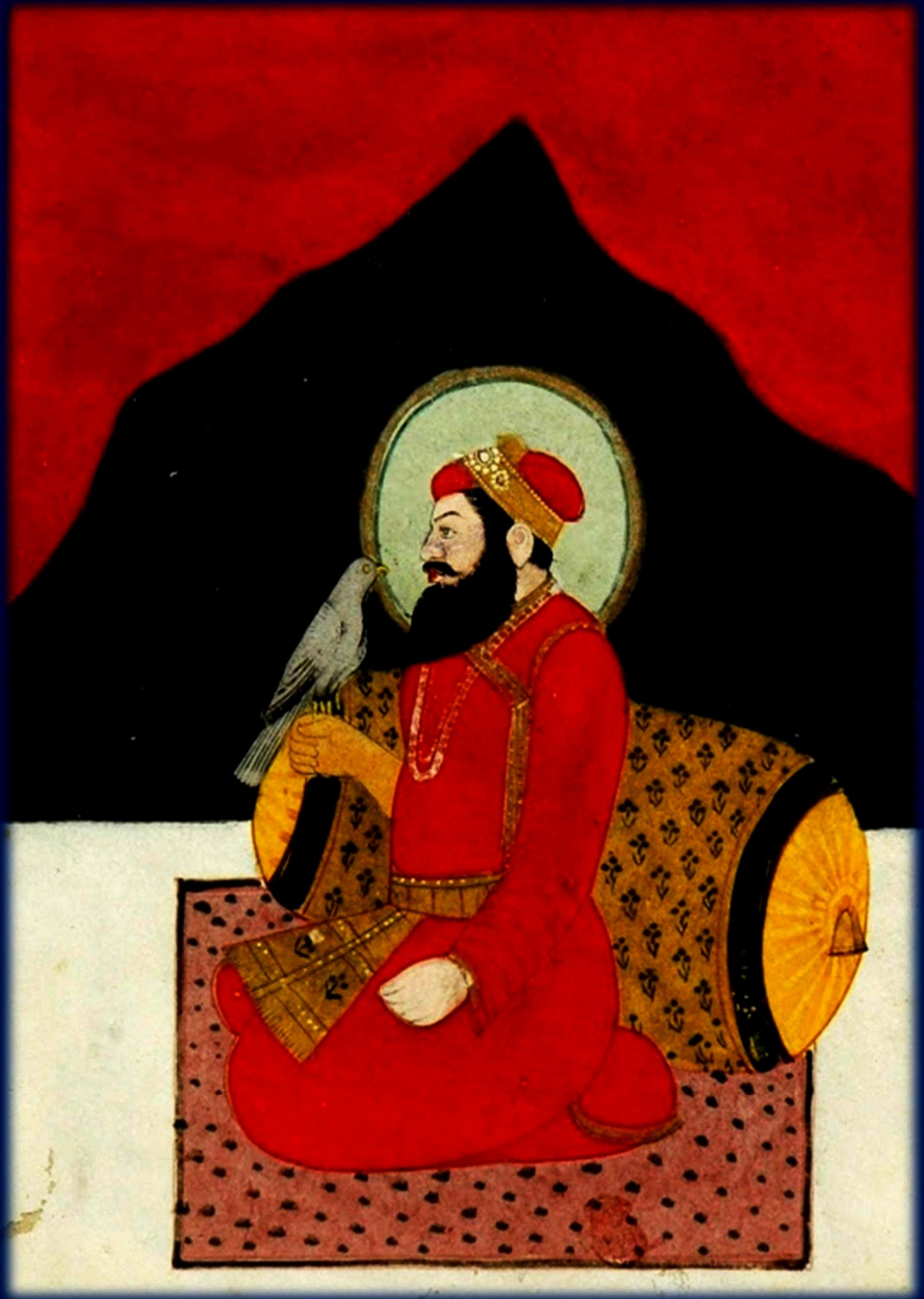
यह अत्यंत हर्ष का विषय है की मूल रूप से ओडिशा निवासी, मात्र २२ वर्षीय युवा लेखक श्री अबिनाश महापात्र ने इतनी कम उम्र में सिख धरम के इतिहास पर शोध करते हुए अपने पुस्तकें लिखे हैं। एक गैर सिख होते हुए भी इस युवा लेखक ने जिस तरह से अपनी लेखनी के माध्यम से सिख धरम के इतिहास को दर्शाया है वह अत्यंत सराहनीय एवं अनुकरणीय है। सिख धरम के प्रारम्भ से ही जो इतिहासकर्ता इस पर खोज विचार किये, उन्होंने इस धरम के सभी तथ्यों को सही ढंग से प्रस्तुत नहीं कर पाए थे और विडम्बना यह रही की जो कुछ भी लिखा गया, वो मुगलों ने या अंग्रेजों ने लिखा। सिख धरम के ऊपर जो खोज भी हुए वो इन्ही आधार पर ही होते रहें।

युवा लेखक श्री अबिनाश महापात्र के पुस्तकों के माध्यम से सिख धरम को जानना और समझना मेरे लिए एक अप्रतिम अनुभव रहा। मेरे लिए सबसे बड़ी हार्दिक प्रसन्नता की बात यह हुई की श्री अबिनाश महापात्र एक सिख ना होते हुए भी, सिख धरम के लिए जो आस्था और सम्मान दिखाए हैं, वो कल्पनाओं से परे है। येह अत्यंत गौरव का विषय है की एक इतनी कम उम्र के पूर्वी भारतीय युवा लेखक ने सिख धरम के इतिहास विकाश क्रम और उसकी उपलब्धियों पर ३८ पुस्तकें लिखी है जो देश विदेश में सिख धरम के अस्तित्व का विस्तार बताती है। श्री अबिनाश महापात्र के द्वारा रचित दो पुस्तकें **द सिख हिस्ट्री ऑफ़ ईस्ट इंडिया** और **द सिख हिस्ट्री ऑफ़ डेक्कन इंडिया** तखत सचखंड श्री हज़ूर अबचलनगर साहिब नांदेड़ से प्रमाणित और प्रशंसित है।

युवा लेखक श्री अबिनाश महापात्र के येह उपलब्धि आने वाली पीढ़ियों के लिए अनुकरणीय मिसाल है। मैं श्री अबिनाश को इस शानदार उपलब्धि के लिए हार्दिक बधाई देती हूँ और उनके उज्ज्वल भविष्य की कामना करती हूँ।

एकता सहरावत

संसदीय राजभाषा समिति



**A VERY RARE PAINTING OF
SATGURU SRI GURU TEGH BAHADUR JI MAHARAJ**

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DEDICATION

*Devotedly dedicated to my life's sole inspiration &
guide*

Param Satkaryog Singh Sahib Gyani Kulwant Singh Ji
(Hon. Jathedar, Takhat Sachkhand Sri Hazur Abchal Nagar Sahib)
&

Sardar Ravinder Singh Asha Singh Bungai
*(Hon. Secretary of Gurdwara Management Board, Takhat
Sachkhand Sri Hazur Abchal Nagar Sahib)*

Preface from The Author

I have put the pen to paper but the contemplation is not mine. The efforts may seem to be stiff for me but the outgrowth in the figure of this paperback is not mine. I may seem to be the novelist of this tome and the accumulator of statements sequentially generating chapters to widen the facts in aspect and apt but the initiative is not mine. In favor of inscribing my research work, I may get the title of Author of this book but the credit should not be planted on me.

The contemplation, outgrowth, initiatives and plantations of credits are from and should be implanted on The Supreme Formless Lord “Waheguru Ji” who has chosen me who bears the designation of His slave to work on the journeys of the Sikh Gurus. This book of mine is a compilation of the 8 books written by me pertaining to the Eastern India including the country of Bangladesh namely,

1. The Sikh History of Bihar
2. The Sikh History of Assam
3. The Sikh History of Bangladesh
4. The Sikh History of West Bengal
5. The Sikh History of Odisha
6. The Sikh History of Arunachal Pradesh
7. The Sikh History of Sikkim
8. The Sikh History of Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

Hence in essence to all the themes enclosed, I have decided to entitle this book as “**The Sikh History of East India**”. The contents of the book encompass the Spiritual Journeys (Udasis) of the Sikh Gurus pertaining to east India, the messages they conveyed through discourses, spiritual debate (siddh Gosht) or singing the Shabad. Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji – the First Sikh Guru took the first Global Spiritual Journeys (Udasis) towards the East and the consigns of His visit have gone concealed from the mankind in some accessible as well as inaccessible places across the globe.

Apart from these places visited by Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj, Satguru Shri Guru Har Gobind Ji – the sixth Sikh Guru appointed missionaries among which the chiefs appointed were Bhai Almast Ji & Baba Gurditta Ji for the propagation of Sikh Religion in East India. The establishments of Sikh Religion in Eastern India took a further fillip with the visits of Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Ji Maharaj – the ninth Sikh Guru, the birth of Kalgidhar Pita Sahib Sri Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj in Patna Sahib and the visit of Maharaj Ranjit Singh Ji to Odisha which proves that the East India has inscribed its name in Golden Letters throughout the pages of Sikh History.

On a comprehensive exploration on the travels of these Udasis (Spiritual Travels), one can make out that wherever the Sikh Gurus visited all were impressed by their ways of life and exposition of the philosophy which not only included the locals but also Kings, Sultans, Maulvis, Pandits, Monks as well as Scholars. The parishes where the Sikh Gurus visited still possess their belongings conserved with the locals in the form of Gurdwaras, Temples, Matths, Monasteries or even in their personal dwellings, a few of which are in wrecked conditions.

The real essence of these Udasis (Spiritual Journey) of the Sikh Gurus to the religious places pertaining to different religions can be epitomized as the mission to liberate people from superstitions, infructuous deeds, hypocrisy and caste-based differences; thus, freeing them from the shackles of fake religious heads and scholars. The main motive of liberating the people from these attributes was to connect them to the True Lord and to make them realize the Real essence of Human Birth. Even we can easily make out that the thread of Historical connection from Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's visit to the creation of Khalsa Panth is continuous in one way or the other.

In this book, I have tried to cover the entire travels of the Sikh Gurus and the Khalsa Raj establishments in a chronological sequence in the region of East India as well as the country of Bangladesh with a detailed mapping along with the evidential records, imageries of the places and consigns related to their visits which are still existing or have vanished with due course of time be it be under natural calamities or ignorance. Being a staunch believer of Hazuri Maryada, this book of mine has been authenticated by Takhat Sachkhand Sri Hazur Abchal Nagar Sahib.

I deliver my empathetic thankfulness to Param Satkaryog Singh Saab Gyani Kulwant Singh Ji (Jathedar – Takhat Sachkhand Sri Hazur Abchal Nagar Sahib) and all the members of the Gurdwara Board, Takhat Sachkhand Sri Hazur Abchal Nagar Sahib who have stood by me and guided me as a father commanding his son. My earnest gratitude to the Research Scholars and various Sikh Dignitaries for authenticating my inscriptions and supporting me to publish this work of mine through their best wishes and appreciations.

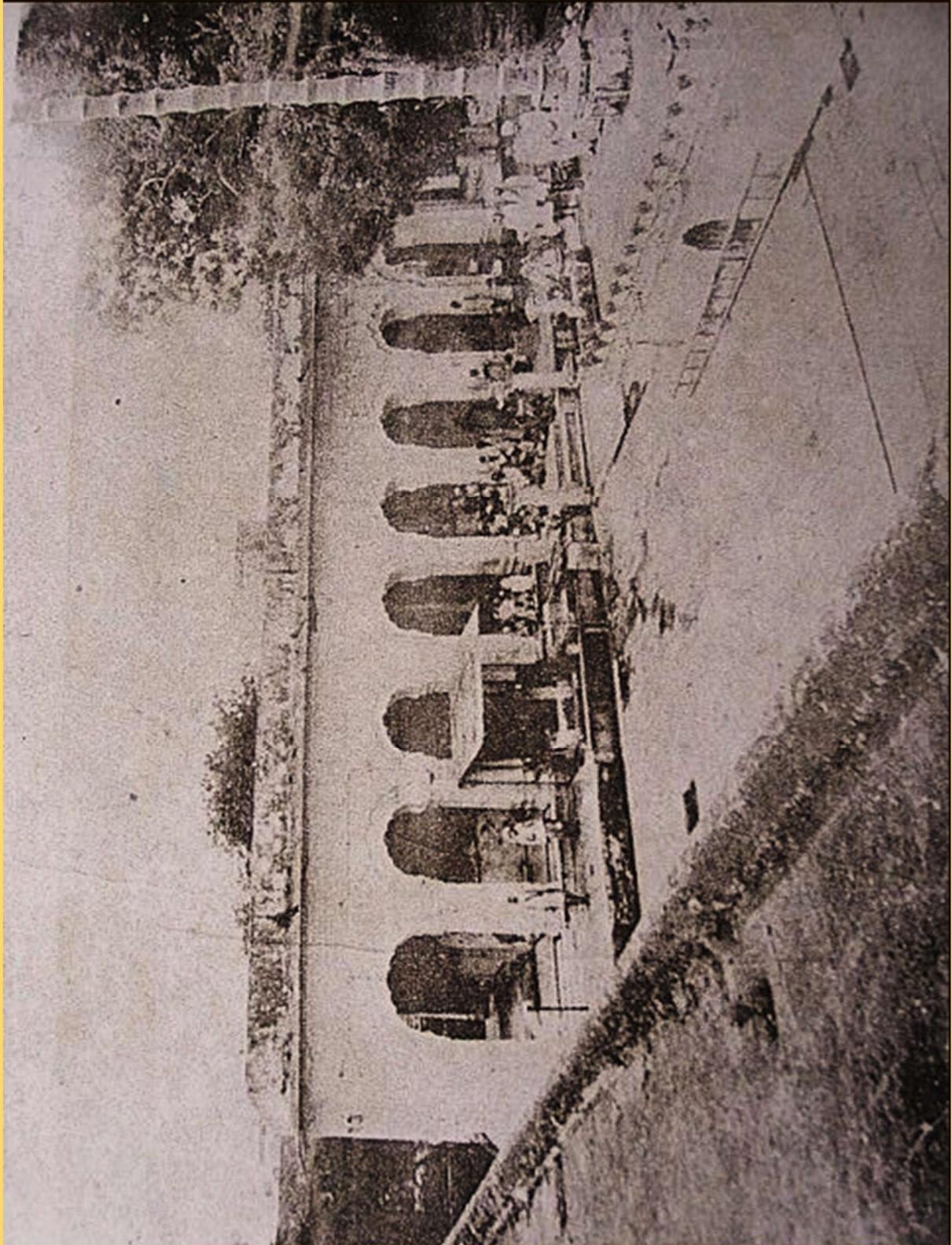
Abinash Mahapatra
(Sikh Historian & Author)

President – Punjabi Global Foundation, Odisha Chapter.
President – Legal Cell, Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee Bihar.



CHAPTER - I

The Sikh History of Bihan



A Rare Image of Takhat Sri Hari Mandar Ji Patna Sahib (Bihar)



ਸਿੱਖ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕ ਕਮੇਟੀ (ਬਿਹਾਰ)
ਸਿਖ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕ ਕਮੇਟੀ (ਬਿਹਾਰ)
SIKH GURUDWARA PRABANDHAK COMMITTEE (BIHAR)
Shurya Bageshwari Appt. 302, East Boring Canal Road, Patna-01



Ref. No. President / 14-2020

Date: 15/11/2020

I am delighted to share that a 22 years old young Sikh Historian cum Author, named Abinash Mahapatra, a permanent resident of Odisha has written the book named "Sikh History of Bihar" in this tender age. The speciality lies in the fact that being a Non-Sikh, this young author has described the entire Sikh History pertaining to the state of Bihar strictly according to the Gurmat Theology & Principles starting from the visit of first Guru Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj Ji to the tenth Guru Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj Ji and the establishment of various Historical Gurdwaras in a very chronological sequence.

I would recommend this book to be a must read which will be very beneficial for the readers and they will learn a lot as it is for the first time that such a Sikh Literature is being published with enormous research and authentic data portraying each and every blissful instance associated with the magnificent Sikh History pertaining to this state.

Hence apart from me, the contents of this book have been scrutinised, verified and authenticated by Sardar Lakhwinder Singh Lakha who is currently the Chairman of Dharam Prachar Committee - Takhat Sri Harimandar Ji Patna Sahib as well as the Vice President of Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee Bihar, Sardar Parmeet Singh Bagga (Ankush Bagga) who is currently the State Media Incharge of Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee Bihar and all the members of Sikh Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee Bihar who have praised Abinash Mahapatra, the author of this book and blessed him to stay connected with Guru Maharaj Ji in the same way as he is.

SINCE 2008

Sardar Suraj Singh Nalwa
President - SGPCB



SATGURU SRI GURU TEGH BAHADUR SAHIB JI MAHARAJ
(NAUVEY PATSHAH – THE NINETH SIKH GURU)

An Introduction to The Bihar Sikh History

Inscribed as Magadh in the Historical Records, the state of Bihar in Eastern India is one of the oldest inhabited places in the world with a historical significance tracing back to 3000 years. The land where Gautam Buddha once lived, a land of monasteries, its association with Buddhism and Jainism making the state a must visit place for peace seekers and people who would like to get a feel of the tribal culture and experience life in the rural parts of the country of India.

The historicity of this state stepped to peak when the Sikh Religion was introduced in this state by the visit of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj. I would like to bring to the notice of the readers that I have mentioned in my written book – **“The Sikh History of Uttar Pradesh”**, that the region of Chandrauli marks the last place of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj’s visit in the state of Uttar Pradesh. From Chandrauli, Guruji entered the province of Bihar and thus is the chorological sequence of the path taken by Guruji in this state –

1. Sasaram
2. Gaya
3. Bodhgaya
4. Rajouli
5. Nalanda
6. Patna
7. Hajipur
8. Lalganj
9. Katihar
10. Munger
11. Bhagalpur
12. Sahibganj
13. Lakshmipore
14. Baidyanath

Post to the visit of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj to the state of Bihar, it was Satguru Shri Guru Amar Daas Ji Maharaj who appointed Chacha Phaggu Mal Ji in this state to propagate the principles of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj. Even, Baba Gurditta Ji – son of 6th Sikh Guru – Chhevin Patshah Satguru Shri Guru Har Gobind Sahib Ji Maharaj visited this state. Subsequently, it was the significant visit of 9th Sikh Guru – Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Maharaj for whom the state of Bihar got its name inscribed in golden letters in the folios of Sikh History. Chronological Sequence of Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Maharaj’s travel in the state of Bihar -

1. Sasaram
2. Bodhgaya
3. Nalanda

4. Patna
5. Monghyr
6. Bhagalpur
7. Colgong
8. Sahibganj
9. Kantnagar
10. Lakshmipore

Followed to this, was the birth of the 10th Sikh Guru – Dashmesh Pita/Kalgidhar Pita Sahib Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj and the establishment of the Takhat Shri Harimandar Ji Patna Sahib by Maharaja Ranjit Singh Ji. Kalgidhar Patshah Sahib Sri Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj Himself says the following lines on East India in Bachittar Natak of Sri Dasam Granth Sahib Ji,

**“Mur pit Purab, kiyas payana
Bhant bhant ke Tiratha nana
Jab eh Jat tribaini bhaye
Pun dan din karat bitaye.”**

(My father went to the east, He visited all sorts of places of pilgrimage; When he reached Tribaini (Prayag), He spent his time in alms-giving)

A comprehensive analysis on all the above-mentioned facts clearly suggests that the establishment of Khalsa Raj in this state is continuous in one way or the other. This book **“The Sikh History of Bihar”** focuses on the detailed analysis of Sikh History pertaining to this state. All my gratitude and prayers for my dearest Singh Saab Gyani Ranjit Singh Ji Gohar – E – Maskeen, Jathedar of Takhat Shri Harimandar Ji Patna Sahib who has always guided me in every step of the researches, I have conducted on Sikh History till date.

I extend my hearty and empathetic thankfulness to Sardar Lakhwinder Singh Ji (Chairman – Dharam Parchar Committee) of Gurdwara Management Committee (Takhat Shri Harimandar Ji Patna Sahib), Sardar Suraj Singh Nalwa Ji (President) of S.G.P.C.B (Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Bihar), Advocate Sardar Parmmeet Singh Bagga Ji – State Media Incharge and Gaya District Coordinator of S.G.P.C.B (Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Bihar) & Bhai Simranjit Singh Ji (District Coordinator – Sasaram) of S.G.P.C.B (Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Bihar). My empathetic thankfulness to them and to the readers of this book.

The Sikh History of Bihar

In His first Udasi (Spiritual Journey) towards East India, Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj osculated the state of Bihar from Chandrauli, Uttar Pradesh. In Bihar, Sasaram marks the first place which was visited by Guruji. The divine and melodious Shabad of Guruji dragged the devout and pious Sangat from the shackles of superstitions, fear and evil doers.

Guruji stayed here for few days and in this tenure, people of all classes be it be the rich merchants, the Zamindar, saints, monks etc. all visited Guruji and sought His Blessings. The Benevolent Master preached them the principles of Kirat Karo, Vand Chako and Naam Japo. After a few days stay, Guruji departed.

While heading from Sasaram towards Gaya, prior to the outskirts, Guruji came across a young shepherd who was roasting some green grams fetched from the nearby fields. Guruji and Bhai Mardana Ji sat few distances apart from him and as soon as the shepherd eyed Guruji and Bhai Mardana Ji, he ran to them and shared a few green grams. Guruji happily accepted his offering and blessed him. Feeling Guruji and Bhai Mardana Ji might be hungry, the shepherd uttered,

“You seem hungry. Please allow me to get some food for you. My abode is not too far and is nearby”.

The Benevolent Master denied and retorted,

“You are a poor gentle man with a princely heart. By the grace of the True Lord, you will be a prince in future. Earn honestly, feed the poor and live in His will”.

The words of the Master befallen and he became a prince of some state but he followed the path as shown to him by Guruji and propagated His principles. Ensuing a few distances, Guruji halted at a place where a wealthy trader was found celebrating the birthday of his only son.

The aristocrats were bestowed with great respect, wealth, foods and drinks. Unfortunately, the poor and oppressed were ignored. Bent with hunger when Bhai Mardana Ji visited the party, he too was ignored. Feeling dejected, he returned to Guruji and started complaining about the negative attributes of the affluent. The Ever-knowing Master instructed Bhai Mardana Ji,

“Mardana Ji, have patience and observe the happening. The man is clearing his debts to his creditor who is born to him as his son”.

As soon as Guruji concluded his utterances, Lo and Behold! Thus, falls the birthday boy dead on the lap of his father. Soon from the aura of celebration, commenced tears, screams and the surrounding was deemed. Sobbing over the child's body, the family members carried the corpse to the cremation ground. Guruji said to Bhai Mardana Ji,

“The shackles of ego thus get shattered when a man turns possessive towards his wealth and luxuries. The wise acknowledgement of the ambiguous future instils the spirit of God Realization. Charity and Naam Simran are the both sides of a coin which seeks the True Lord. Hence, imbibing in the remembrance of the True Lord liberates the soul from the cycle of birth and death”.

Finally, Guruji reached the province of Gaya. People were dumbfounded to eye a striking, sunny and magnificent appearance and wondered who He is! Some Pandits approached Guruji and asked,

“You have to give charity in the name of Your ancestors else You will experience the deadliest Hell”.

Guruji responded,

“I have already offered handouts for My ancestors, Holy saints and for Myself. But the charity is such that the ego of their mind has gone and they have been blessed. Heaven and hell are there, when there is ego in the mind. But those who have recited the Lord's name that is like a flame have been blessed”.

The Pandits raged and uttered,

“Light a lamp and float it in River Water. Perform the rites and offer cooked rice in bowl of leaves. By the blessings of ancestors, you can attain Siddhi”.

Guruji instructed Bhai Mardana to strike the strings of the Rabab in Rag Asa and uttered a Shabad which is penned beneath,

ਦੀਵਾ ਮੇਰਾ ਏਕੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਦੁਖੁ ਵਿਚਿ ਪਾਇਆ ਤੇਲੁ ॥

Dheevaa Maeraa Eaek Naam Dhukh Vich Paaeiaa Thael ||

The One Name is my lamp; I have put the oil of suffering into it.

ਉਨਿ ਚਾਨਣਿ ਓਹੁ ਸੋਖਿਆ ਚੂਕਾ ਜਮ ਸਿਉ ਮੇਲੁ ॥੧॥

Oun Chanaan Ouhu Sokhiaa Chookaa Jam Sio Mael ||1||

Its flame has dried up this oil, and I have escaped my meeting with the Messenger of Death. ||1||

ਲੋਕਾ ਮਤ ਕੇ ਫਕੜਿ ਪਾਇ ॥

Lokaa Math Ko Fakarr Pae ||

O people, do not make fun of me.

ਲਖ ਮੜਿਆ ਕਰਿ ਏਕਠੇ ਏਕ ਰਤੀ ਲੇ ਭਾਹਿ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

Lakh Marriaa Kar Eaekathae Eaek Rathee Lae Bhaahi ||1|| Rehaao ||

Thousands of wooden logs, piled up together, need only a tiny flame to burn.

||1||Pause||

ਪਿੰਡੁ ਪਤਲਿ ਮੇਰੀ ਕੇਸਉ ਕਿਰਿਆ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾਰੁ ॥

Pindd Pathal Maeree Kaeso Kiriaa Sach Naam Karathaar ||

The Lord is my festive dish, of rice balls on leafy plates; the True Name of the Creator Lord is my funeral ceremony.

ਐਥੈ ਓਥੈ ਆਗੈ ਪਾਛੈ ਏਹੁ ਮੇਰਾ ਆਧਾਰੁ ॥੨॥

Aithhai Outhhai Aagai Paashhai Eachu Maeraa Aadhhaar ||2||

Here and hereafter, in the past and in the future, this is my support. ||2||

ਗੰਗ ਬਨਾਰਸਿ ਸਿਫਤਿ ਤੁਮਾਰੀ ਨਾਵੈ ਆਤਮ ਰਾਉ ॥

Gang Banaaras Sifath Thumaaree Naavai Aatham Raao ||

The Lord's Praise is my River Ganges and my city of Benares; my soul takes its sacred cleansing bath there.

ਸਚਾ ਨਾਵਣੁ ਤਾਂ ਥੀਐ ਜਾਂ ਅਹਿਨਿਸਿ ਲਾਗੈ ਭਾਉ ॥੩॥

Sachaa Naavan Thaan Thheei Jaan Ahinis Laagai Bhao ||3||

That becomes my true cleansing bath, if night and day, I enshrine love for You.

||3||

ਇਕ ਲੋਕੀ ਹੋਰੁ ਛਮਿਛਰੀ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣੁ ਵਟਿ ਪਿੰਡੁ ਖਾਇ ॥

Eik Lokee Hor Shhamishharee Braahaman Vatt Pindd Khaae ||

The rice balls are offered to the gods and the dead ancestors, but it is the Brahmins who eat them!

ਨਾਨਕ ਪਿੰਡੁ ਬਖਸੀਸ ਕਾ ਕਬਹੂੰ ਨਿਖੁਟਸਿ ਨਾਹਿ ॥੪॥੨॥੩੨॥

Naanak Pindd Bakhasees Kaa Kabehoon Nikhoottas Naahi ||4||2||32||

O Nanak, the rice balls of the Lord are a gift which is never exhausted.

Heeding to the words of Guruji, the priests fell at His Holy Feet and became His followers. Currently a Gurdwara commemorating Guruji's visit is persisting in this region known as Dev Ghat Gurdwara.

From Gaya, Guruji ensued towards Bodhgaya where He preferred to be on the outskirts of the town. Bhai Mardana Ji commenced the divine songs and Guruji got immersed in the love of the Lord. The Mahant of a Budh Temple in Bodhgaya named Dev Gir got engrossed by the Divine Shabad. He was a renowned Mahant of the same temple where Gautam Buddha meditated and attained enlightenment.

Though highly learned, he was in search of true happiness. The knowledge had given a feeling of pride to his mind and he believed in renunciation. But while deviating his mind from sentiment to renunciation, he lost the softness. The ever-knowing Master knew the attributes of the Mahant and hence, the following conversation commenced.

The Benevolent Master uttered,

“In a living branch, there exists both strength and flexibility. Attachment is love but attachment to bad deeds is unscrupulous. Attachment to perishable things is immoral. We should love the Lord, who will live forever. We should love to do goodness. That will make a person pious”.

Mahant Dev Gir probed Guruji,

If, we don't have to kill the mind as well as the senses, then what shall we do?

Guruji responded,

“The senses have to be stopped from doing evil. We should not kill the sentiment of love. The senses should be moved away towards the True Lord. The only way to love the True Lord is by reciting His name, meditating on His name, thanking Him for all that He has bequeathed upon us. One need not have to undergo any Hath Yoga or rigorous penance. Only the mind has to be reined by having faith in the Lord and seeking support from His name”.

Subsequent to the conversation, Guruji closed His eyes and asked Bhai Mardana Ji to utter a Shabad. Mahant Dev Gir got inner sensation and his eyes were filled with tears of ecstasy. Much earlier, who thought that he was quite knowledgeable, got imbibed in the forgetfulness of the Lord. Soon after, when he delivered sermons, he started speaking about the Lord. The wandering mind transformed tranquil.

Mahant Dev Gir developed such infinite adoration for Guruji that he made Him stay in his company for many days. Guruji's Godly touch, the sacredness and immersion in the love of the Lord had a magical effect on him. His soul was awakened as if he got a new life from his attribute of lifeless-ness.

From Bodhgaya, Guruji proceeded towards Rajouli. Here persisted a Sufi saint named Kalan Shah who was doing abstemious practices. Day and night, a fire was lit and he kept sitting and meditating. Guru Sahib used to extend His support towards those who were in mistaken beliefs towards proceeding towards the path of the True Lord and made them reach their goals of attaining Spiritual Bliss.

The Saint Kalan Shah was in meditation for a prolonged period. When Guruji was in Rajouli, Kalan Shah heard the news that there persists a magical effect of Guruji's Shabad. In a concealed manner, once he heard the Shabad while Guruji was singing. The divine Shabad and its meaning had a profound effect on his mind. Then, he fell at the Holy Feet of Guruji and prayed the Merciful Master for His Blessings.

The gracious Master blessed Kalan Shah with the Lord's name, through which he merged into love and went into rapture. There were marked two places connoting to these incidents in Rajouli. One connotes to Chota Sangat where the saint Kalan Shah meditated and kept burning the ritual fire and other is Bara Sangat where Guruji stayed and Kalan Shah fell at His Holy Feet.

Next to Rajouli, Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj halted at Nalanda. Here, Guruji had discourses with Buddhist and Jain monks and impressed upon the importance of devotion to God without renunciation: like a lotus. Here Guruji uttered a Shabad and at that epoch, the city was surrounded by springs of hot water and cool drinking water was not available to the people. As instructed by Guruji, people dug a place and cool water gushed out. The historical spring is known as Guru Nanak Sheetal Kund. Patna Gazetteer (1991) page 101 has a reference to this Kund recorded in revenue records at Khata No. 332 and Khatauni No. 7690 of Mauza - Rajgir, District - Nalanda.

Ensuing from Nalanda, Guruji reached Patna (Pataliputra), the city which holds significant identity in the Golden Pages of Sikh History. A robust study of the historical records privileges that there were 64 gates and 670 towers protected by moat and wooden walls when Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji visited Patna.

Of all the gates, Guru Sahib entered through the western gate and visited Bhagat Jaitmal's house situated on the banks of River Ganga. This place is now called as Alamganj Mohalla. Bhagat Jaitmal was nearly 350 years old when he met Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji. He prayed Guru Sahib to liberate him from this world.

On hearing his petition, Guru Sahib started to examine his patience. After a long conversation, Guru Sahib assured him that He will come in His 9th birth to liberate his soul. Subsequent to this plea, Bhagat Jaitmal prayed Guru Sahib to strengthen him so that he could dip in Ganga River. Guru Sahib assured Bhagat Jaitmal that he would not have to go to dip in Ganga. The river would come itself to him.

Guru Sahib instructed to dig a tank where River Ganga would bath Bhagat Jaitmal Ji in the form of a cow. Assuring Bhagat Jaitmal that He would liberate him in His 9th birth, Guru Sahib and Bhai Mardana Ji started proceeding. Then came the king and queen of Patna to meet Guruji who had already met Him in Kurukshetra while on exile after being

defeated by the enemy king. The details of this incidence have been furnished in my book **“The Sikh History of Uttar Pradesh”**.

Guruji had blessed them to re acquire their kingdom and thus it happened. They came to Guruji to pay a thanks giving homage and hence departed. By the time, the conversation concluded, it was almost dusk. Finding an upland, Guru Sahib and Bhai Mardana Ji rested by lying on the land. All of a sudden, the following conversation commenced between Guruji and Bhai Mardana Ji.

Bhai Mardana Ji probed,

Patshah Ji! You say the Lord is omnipresent. He is within everything of what we see. This entire nature is one of His attire. Why can't I feel the Lord?

Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj responded,

O Mardana Ji, observe carefully. When any distant object is to be seen, then the vision binding is obligatory. Similarly, when you bind your thoughts, your mind comes in a state of assiduity. When such phenomena happen, you can absolutely feel His presence.

Bhai Mardana Ji retorted,

I put on all my vision, attain assiduity while doing Kirtan but never had even a glance of Him. You advised me to do Simran which I am doing regularly. Even I am heeding in every step of my life. But O the knower of Lord's secret, please have sympathy on me and give me the vision to see the Lord.

Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji instructed,

Mardana Ji! Do Simran. Be a good observer. A sane person can recognise the quality of inner red material of a water melon from its green outer covering. You are a person with senses who can visualize the nature. But have you ever directed your observation that the eyes with which you observe is also a boon to you by the Lord! The entire globe speaks, sounds are produced, they speak in many melodies; some in Rishabh (Re), some in Gandhar (Ga) and some in Pancham (Pa).

**No one knows this concept. But how can you tell this voice belongs to such melody or this is Rag Ramkali? With what weight one measures? With which glass one sees and with which concept the objects are distinguished? With what researches your inner self says you that this is Rag Kanada or Rag Kalyan? How can you differentiate this is Teen Taal or this is Char Taal? Please tell me,
Mardana Ji! How do you differentiate?**

Thus, said Bhai Mardana Ji,

Patshah Ji, this has happened all because of I sing them all the time. Connecting the mind with the inner soul to distinguish the melodies and recognising them has instilled a lot experience within me.

Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj said,

Mardana Ji, you are right. In your Rubab, you strike the strings and recognise the positions to hit which will produce the desired melody. But what about your throat? There are no strings or chords which you can pluck to create sound! How does the desired melody emerge?

Bhai Mardana Ji responded with amazement,

Guruji, I am astounded. I never realised this fact but Your words have ignited my eagerness to comprehend this phenomenon.

Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj said,

It is your consciousness Mardana Ji which only you can conceive and not any other individual. Don't you have a perception Mardana Ji which only you can apprehend and not others?

Bhai Mardana Ji responded,

Patshah Ji, You are right! Yes, I do have such perception.

Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj uttered,

The ceaseless recitation of the True Lord's name imbibes into the sub consciousness mind, subsequently into the heart and thus ensues to the body cells. Thus, commences the outcome when you merge in ecstasy and experience the True Lord all around.

Bhai Mardana Ji uttered,

Patshah Ji, as I do have awareness of the musical note, I wish to bequeath the same of the True Lord. My True Benevolent Master, please bless this mere servant of Yours.

Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj responded,

Mardana Ji, it's going late at night. Now, you should forty winks. Tomorrow you will acquire the knowledge of inner perception which is higher to everything. If you wish to experience the True Lord then recite His name in every instance of life be it be sitting, eating, sleeping whatever be.

Saying so, Satguru Ji got immersed in deep meditation and Bhai Mardana Ji went to forty winks. The very next morning, when the Sun shone and the rays tore up the dark blanket of Mother Earth to transform the dusk to dawn, thus wakes up Bhai Mardana Ji and starts complaining about his hunger to Guruji.

Guruji offered Bhai Mardana Ji a very uncommon exquisite stone and asked him to sell it to the maximum auction-goer. At first, Bhai Mardana Ji placed the stone in the lead of a vegetable seller who offered Him only one Radish while Bhai Mardana Ji asked for

two. Secondly, Bhai Mardana Ji approached a cloth seller who priced the stone with the amount of 2 yards' cloth.

Thirdly, it was a sweet – meat seller who priced the stone with an amount of 2 pounds sweet but subsequently when Bhai Mardana ji approached goldsmiths and jewellers, one of them suggested him to visit Salas Rai who was identified as an experienced reviewer not only of jewels but also of humans. Along with, he was a poet possessing bottomless awareness towards Spiritual Literature.

When Bhai Mardana Ji reached the abode of Merchant Salas Rai, he met Adharka (the most trustworthy servant of Salas Rai) who glanced at the jewel and took Bhai Mardana Ji to his master. Bhai Mardana Ji would notice the astounding looks of Salas Rai while he was eyeing the stone. All of a sudden, Salas Rai uttered,

“This stone is so precious that even the owner must be granted a tribute offering of one hundred rupees.”

Hence, Bhai Mardana Ji was returned the stone with a sum of one hundred rupees through Adharka. Observing the strange incidence, Bhai Mardana Ji probed,

“My friend, if you are returning me the stone, how can I accept the amount from you? If you want to give me the amount, then please do keep the stone with you”.

Salas Rai responded,

“This stone is so precious that even my master being the wealthiest merchant of Patna city cannot pay the price for it. The price paid of one hundred rupees is only the tributary offering”.

Heeding to the words of Salas Rai, though confused, Bhai Mardana Ji returned to Guruji and explained Him all that happened. Guruji uttered,

“I have no rights to accept the wealth of Salas Rai if he doesn't keep the stone. Mardana Ji, return the amount to him and tell him to pay any price which he can afford against the stone”.

Bhai Mardana Ji did the same as instructed by Guruji and after a keen observation of this happening, Salas rai realized that either the owner of this stone is a great magnate who have no overhaul for such precious stones or may be a great saint who has renounced all His wanting. Restless to live for long, Salas Rai ordered Adharka,

“Adharka, let's move to meet this great personality. Make preparations accordingly and accompany me. Take along wealth and gifts as must be bestowed upon a royal prince”.

The moment Salas Rai and Adharka saw Guruji, His smile and His personality, they got enchanted and they were in bliss. Both the servant and the master stood with folded hands in front of Guruji. Even Guruji uttered the beneath penned Shabad in Raag Maru indicating to both the Master and Servant,

ਬਿਮਲ ਮਝਾਰਿ ਬਸਸਿ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਜਲ ਪਦਮਨਿ ਜਾਵਲ ਰੇ ॥

Bimal majhār basas nirmal jal padman jāval re.

In the pure, immaculate waters, both the lotus and the slimy scum are found.

ਪਦਮਨਿ ਜਾਵਲ ਜਲ ਰਸ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਸੰਗਿ ਦੇਖ ਨਹੀ ਰੇ ॥੧॥

Padman jāval jal ras sangat sang dokh nahī re. ||1||

The lotus flower is with the scum and the water, but it remains untouched by any pollution. ||1||

ਦਾਦਰ ਤੂ ਕਬਹਿ ਨ ਜਾਨਸਿ ਰੇ ॥

Dādar tū kabēh na jānas re.

You frog, you will never understand.

ਭਖਸਿ ਸਿਬਾਲੁ ਬਸਸਿ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਜਲ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਨ ਲਖਸਿ ਰੇ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

Bhakhas sibāl basas nirmal jal amrit na lakhas re. ||1|| rahāo.

You eat the dirt, while you dwell in the immaculate waters. You know nothing of the ambrosial nectar there. ||1||Pause||

ਬਸੁ ਜਲ ਨਿਤ ਨ ਵਸਤ ਅਲੀਅਲ ਮੇਰ ਚਚਾ ਗੁਨ ਰੇ ॥

Bas jal nit na vasat alīal mer chachā gun re.

You dwell continually in the water; the bumble bee does not dwell there, but it is intoxicated with its fragrance from afar.

ਚੰਦ ਕੁਮੁਦਨੀ ਦੂਰਹੁ ਨਿਵਸਸਿ ਅਨਭਉ ਕਾਰਨਿ ਰੇ ॥੨॥

Chand kumudanī dhūrahu nivasas anbhāo kāran re. ||2||

Intuitively sensing the moon in the distance, the lotus bows its head. ||2||

ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਖੰਡੁ ਦੂਧਿ ਮਧੁ ਸੰਚਸਿ ਤੂ ਬਨ ਚਾਤੁਰ ਰੇ ॥

Amrit khand dūdh madh sanchas tū ban chātūr re.

The realms of nectar are irrigated with milk and honey; you think you are clever
to live in the water.

ਅਪਨਾ ਆਪੁ ਤੂ ਕਬਹੁ ਨ ਛੋਡਸਿ ਪਿਸਨ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਜਿਉ ਰੇ ॥੩॥

Apnā āp tū kabahu na chhōdas pisan parīt jīo re. ||3||

You can never escape your own inner tendencies, like the love of the flea for
blood. ||3||

ਪੰਡਿਤ ਸੰਗਿ ਵਸਹਿ ਜਨ ਮੁਰਖ ਆਗਮ ਸਾਸ ਸੁਨੇ ॥

Pandit sang vasēh jan mūrakh āgam sās sune.

The fool may live with the Pandit, the religious scholar, and listen to the Vedas
and the Shaastras.

ਅਪਨਾ ਆਪੁ ਤੂ ਕਬਹੁ ਨ ਛੋਡਸਿ ਸੁਆਨ ਪੁਛਿ ਜਿਉ ਰੇ ॥੪॥

Apnā āp tū kabahu na chhōdas suān pūchh jīo re. ||4||

You can never escape your own inner tendencies, like the crooked tail of the dog.
||4||

ਇਕਿ ਪਾਖੰਡੀ ਨਾਮਿ ਨ ਰਾਚਹਿ ਇਕਿ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਚਰਣੀ ਰੇ ॥

Ik pākhandī nām na rāchēh ik har har charṇī re.

Some are hypocrites; they do not merge with the Naam, the Name of the Lord.
Some are absorbed in the Feet of the Lord, Har, Har.

ਪੂਰਬਿ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਪਾਵਸਿ ਨਾਨਕ ਰਸਨਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪਿ ਰੇ ॥੫॥੪॥

Pūrab likhiā pāvas Nānak rasnā nām jap re. ||5||4||

The mortals obtain what they are predestined to receive; O Nanak, with your
tongue, chant the Naam. ||5||4||

Heeding to the Shabad, both the Master and the servant turned to devout disciples of
Guruji. Guruji was much pleased by their devotion and hence, once He adorned Salas
rai with His Own Turban. After getting the Turban adorned on his head, Salas rai felt
enlightened. It was Salas Rai to whom Guruji appointed as the chief of His established
Manji at Patna. Salas Rai transformed his bungalow into a Dharamshala

commemorating Guruji's visit. Salas Rai though being a scholar poet in Spiritual Literature had composed various Shabad which can still be read in Janam Sakhis.

Legend prevails that Guruji even uttered,

“Salas Rai, though I have appointed you as the chief of this Manji, but it will be Adharka and his successors who will succeed you”.

A Manji was established at the residence of Salas Rai and Subsequent to 4 months stay in Patna with him, Guruji ensued towards Hajipur. On way, Guruji crossed through thick forests where He was misled by a bunch of Robbers who suspected Guruji to be a wealthy merchant veiled as a saint. The Ever-Knowing Master smiled and probed,

“What do you want”?

The robbers responded candidly,

“We wish to acquire all your wealth by killing you”.

Guruji uttered,

“You may proceed, but please do me a favour of acquiring some wood and fire for my last rites”.

Initially, the robbers hesitated but soon recognising Guruji's provocation, they appointed one to look after Guruji and bhai Mardana while rest left to acquire the necessities as sought by Guruji. When they walked a few distances, they observed one of their man was hung dead and the populace were planning to do the same with the rest of the robbers persisting in their region.

Eyeing this stance, they rushed towards Guruji, fell at His feet and sought mercy. They prayed,

“Respected Saint, please hoar us from this danger and we assure You to surrender all the goods that we have looted at Your Feet. Distribute them among the needy and save us”.

Guruji instructed them,

“Leave this way completely. Perform farming and feed the poor. Nothing will harm you. Remember the True Lord in single breath and He will be saviour”.

The thieves turned out to be virtuous and noble and hence, Guruji departed. Ensuing for few distances, Guruji crossed through two small villages. In one of the villages, a group of tarnished populaces persisted who even mocked at Guruji. The ever-knowing Master blessed them by saying,

“May you remain conventional at one place”.

Secondly, Guruji came across some villagers who were enough noble and pious. They got devoted to Guruji and hence Guruji blessed them by saying,

“May you get uprooted and scatter at various places”.

Getting confused by the strange attribute of Guruji, Bhai Mardana Ji prayed,

“Patshah Ji, please hoar me from this dilemma. I am unable to recognise this strange act of Yours”.

Guruji responded,

“Mardana Ji, I wished the evils to be intact in a region as the evils should be placed in a prison so that they won’t pollute the society. But where so ever the good souls reach and subside, they will spread the essence the goodness and will build a better society to sustain. Mardana Ji, hence, I confined the evils but scattered the noble”.

Heeding to the words of the Master, Bhai Mardana Ji fell at Guruji’s Feet and uttered,

“Patshah Ji, bizarre are Your Blessings and bizarre are Your curses”.

Finally, after a prolonged sauntering, Guruji reached Hajipur and attended the fair at Harihar Kshetra, popularly known as Harihar Kshetra Mela where large number of people were attracted to Guruji’s Shabad. Currently, the fair is now called Sonepur Mela. According to Muzaffarpur Gazetteer (1958),

“The famous Sonepur fair in Saran district beyond Hajipur was previously held at Hajipur and only oblations were offered to deity at Sonepur.”

A three-day Prachar Camp is also organized at Sonepur by the Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee of Takhat Sri Harimandar Ji, Patna Sahib every year on the day of Kartik Purnima. Sauntering a few distances, Guruji reached Lalganj. Legend prevails that in Hajipur and Lalganj, a huge Sangat was established who were profoundly inspired by Guruji’s preaching and Shabad.

Henceforth Guruji reached Munger, old Mudagagir where He showed the path of attaining Spiritual Bliss by remembering the True Lord and proceeded towards Bhagalpur. At Bhagalpur, Guruji stayed at Barahanath Ghat and even in a place few distance apart.

At both the places, Sangat like swarm of bees accumulated near Guruji and accepted Guruji as their Master. Even in the two places, Dharamshala were constructed which were later termed as Bara Sangat and Chota Sangat Gurdwara. Here in Bhagalpur, just prior to the town of Kahalgaon, there exists three rocky islets in the bed of Ganges. One of them is called Guru Nanak Shah ka Pahar inhabited by Udasi Sadhu named Shanti Baba in the years of 1940s or 1950s.

From Bhagalpur, Guruji ensued towards Sahibganj where exists a Gurdwara commemorating Guruji’s Visit in wrecked condition. From Sahibganj, Guruji ensued and reached Lakshmipore of Kant Nagar District where a memorial was constructed commemorating the visit of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj. Ensuing from Lakshmipore, Guruji reached Deogarh which is now a province of Jharkhand and visited

the Baidyanath Dham where a Manji Sahib existed towards the east of Baidyanath Temple. This portion of Sikh History has been largely unexplored.

It is believed that Guruji had debate with the priests of this temple regarding Brahm Gyan and the priests accepted Guru Sahib as their mentor and superior. Similarly, in Raj Mahal, which is now a part of Jharkhand was once visited by Satguru Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj. There exists a commemorative structure in memory of Guru Sahib in dilapidated condition and has been highly ignored. The locals as well as the under matured children are aware of Guru Sahib's visit to this place.

Subsequent to the first Sikh Guru – Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj visited the Indian state of Bihar during His First Udasi (First Spiritual Journey), it was the third Sikh Guru – Satguru Shri Guru Amardas Ji who followed the footprints of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and established Manji where He appointed a preacher of Nankian Philosophy. In Bihar, Satguru Shri Amar Daas Ji appointed a preacher named Phaggu Mal Ji who was entitled with the name of Chacha Phaggu Mal Ji.

Chacha Phaggu Mal Ji arrived Sasaram in Bihar from Punjab and established a Manji. He was much fortunate to have Darshan of the Sikh Gurus of six Sikh Gurus starting from the 3rd to the 9th Sikh Guru but couldn't have Darshan of the 8th Sikh Guru connoting to a short span of His Gurgaddi Period. By the epoch of 9th Sikh Guru Chacha Phaggu Mal Ji was much aged and was in a sombre thirst to have a glance of Him.

Even the chronicles speak that Baba Gurditta Ji – son of 6th Sikh Guru – Chhevin Patshah Satguru Shri Guru Har Gobind Sahib Ji visited Sasaram and had a meet with Chacha Phaggu Mal Ji. Baba Gurditta Ji camped in the garden (Bagh) of a Nawab in Sasaram and thus staying for few days, departed. The locals had bestowed great respect for Baba Gurditta Ji and there used to be a huge crowd in the Manji established by Chacha Phaggu Mal Ji for the propagation of Sikh Theologies and Principles.

Even legend prevails that the third successor of Mahant Dev Gir named Bhagat Bhagwan had been to Punjab and had Darshan of the 7th Sikh Guru Satguru Shri Guru Har Rai Ji. He accepted the Sikh Doctrines under the guidance of Guruji and was the only person who established 360 Matths in the state of Bihar, then called Magadh.

Chacha Phaggu Mal's wish got fulfilled when Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji descended on the soil of Bihar in the year of 1666 accompanied by Mata Nanki, Mata Gujri Ji and Kirpal Chand Ji along with during His Eastern Udasi (Spiritual Journey). On entering the state of River, Guruji bathed Himself in Karmanasha River. Legend prevails that this river is named so because whosoever gets bathed in it loses the fruit and efficacy of his religious austerities and pilgrimages.

When Guruji concluded his bath, the priests sitting nearby uttered,

“What kind of saint are You? Don't know when you bathed in this river, all your deeds went futile”!

Guruji smiled and responded,

“No water could mar or undo the merits of good actions”.

With His melodious tone in Divine ecstasy, Guruji uttered a Shabad here and broke the shackles of superstitions and blind faiths prevailing in the mind-sets of people. The priests too had Siddh Gosht (Spiritual Debate) with Guruji and finally accepted Guruji as their Master. As the Sikh Historical Records are suggestive, Nauwey Patshah Ji reached Bhabua which is located at a distance of 10 kms from Karmanasha River. The bank of this river has been named after Guru Sahib which has been cited on a hoarding at the river bank as “Guru Tegh Bahadur Ghat”.

There is also a Gurdwara persisting in this region commemorating the visit of Guru Sahib where persists a Handwritten Saroop of Satguru Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Maharaj and this Guru Ghar is managed by only a single Nihang Singh named Sardar Paramjit Singh Ji who seems to be the only Sikh persisting in this province. The Govt. Revenue records have too identified this portion in the name of Satguru Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Ji Maharaj.

Another region corresponding to Satguru Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Maharaj persisting in this province is entitled as Chinari. Here a portion of land find its mention in the Govt. revenue records as Sangat and the local children persisting in this province have revealed that a Gurdwara used to persist in this region which was named as Gurdwara Sri Sangat Sahib. At present, the place where Gurdwara was commemorating the visit of Guru Sahib, persists a magnificent temple.

Then Guruji reached Sasaram, where He along with His family were passing by a tobacco field owned by Bhai Achal Ji and Mata Jio Ji during that epoch. Guruji's horse hesitated did not proceed further into the tobacco fields. Guruji summoned the owners of the field named Bhai Achal Ji and Mata Jio Ji and instilled in them the real essence of Life. He preached them to forbid the use and cultivation of tobacco thus transforming them and the Sangat intoxicated. Guruji ordered them to establish a Gurdwara to which they readily accepted.

Seeing the devotion of the devout couple, Guruji gifted them with one of His steel arrows and the tobacco field of Bhai Achal Ji and Mata Jio Ji where Guruji's horse curbed for taking a step and Guruji ordered for building a Gurdwara, stands Gurdwara Taksali Sangat which was constructed in that epoch and was rebuilt by Nirmala Sant – Baba Raghuvir Singh who belongs to Kankhal of Haridwar.

In this Gurdwara, the arrow gifted to Bhai Achal Ji and Mata Jio Ji by Guruji, a rare picture of Kalgidhar pita Sahib Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj and of the land owner Mata Jio Ji are still persisting and can be observed. This Gurdwara is administered by a 15-member committee of Agraghari Sikhs. Thence, Guruji travelled towards the residence of Chacha Phaggu Mal Ji. When Chacha Phaggu Mal got to know of Guruji's arrival in Sasaram, his joy knew no bounds. The day of longings were concluded and Chacha Phaggu Mal Ji's sombre thirst was quenched. Chacha Phaggu Mal Ji accustomed,

“If in real He is the Ninth Master, then He would enter my residence without any prior permission. I am keeping my door opened”.

Guruji arrived in Sasaram and at first visited Chacha Phaggu Mal Ji's residence. Getting through the opened door of his residence, Guru Sahib addressed,

“Chacha Phaggu Mal Ji”!

Chacha Phaggu Mal Ji bowed at His Sacred Feet and made Him to sit on the special bed which he had prepared for Guruji. In the hut of this Nanakshahi Saint, Guruji resided for 21 days. It was here in the hut of Chacha Phaggu Mal Ji that Guruji composed the following melodious Shabad in Rag Jayjwanti,

ਰਾਮੁ ਸਿਮਰਿ ਰਾਮੁ ਸਿਮਰਿ ਇਹੈ ਤੇਰੈ ਕਾਜਿ ਹੈ ॥

Raam Simar Raam Simar Eihai Thaerai Kaaj Hai ॥

Meditate in remembrance on the Lord - meditate on the Lord; this alone shall be of use to you.

ਮਾਇਆ ਕੇ ਸੰਗੁ ਤਿਆਗੁ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਜੁ ਕੀ ਸਰਨਿ ਲਾਗੁ ॥

Maaeiaa Ko Sang Thiaag Prabh Joo Kee Saran Laag ॥

Abandon your association with Maya, and take shelter in the Sanctuary of God.

ਜਗਤ ਸੁਖ ਮਾਨੁ ਮਿਥਿਆ ਝੂਠੇ ਸਭ ਸਾਜੁ ਹੈ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

Jagath Sukh Maan Mithhiaa Jhootho Sabh Saaj Hai ॥1॥ Rehaao ॥

Remember that the pleasures of the world are false; this whole show is just an illusion. ॥1॥Pause॥

ਸੁਪਨੇ ਜਿਉ ਧਨੁ ਪਛਾਨੁ ਕਾਹੇ ਪਰਿ ਕਰਤ ਮਾਨੁ ॥

Supanae Jio Dhhan Pashhaan Kaahae Par Karath Maan ॥

You must understand that this wealth is just a dream. Why are you so proud?

ਬਾਰੂ ਕੀ ਭੀਤਿ ਜੈਸੇ ਬਸੁਧਾ ਕੇ ਰਾਜੁ ਹੈ ॥੧॥

Baaroo Kee Bheeth Jaisae Basudhhaa Ko Raaj Hai ॥1॥

The empires of the earth are like walls of sand. ॥1॥

ਨਾਨਕੁ ਜਨੁ ਕਹਤੁ ਬਾਤ ਬਿਨਸਿ ਜੈਰੈ ਤੇਰੈ ਗਾਤੁ ॥

Naanak Jan Kehath Baath Binas Jaihai Thaero Gaath ||

Servant Nanak speaks the Truth: your body shall perish and pass away.

Within the 21 days of stay Guruji would visit the nearby places and liberate the people from the shackles of hypocrisy and superstitions and preach them to worship the True Lord. Legend prevails that Guruji visited the garden (Bagh) in Sasaram which was earlier visited by Baba Gurditta Ji. This garden (Bagh) was then owned by Nawab Khankhah. When Guruji entered the garden, it was dilapidated and desiccated.

There was a tree and well in the garden. Guruji tied His horse to the tree, sat on a platform and thus commenced His Shabad. To everyone's out of the blue, the garden got transformed to green and fertile. A large number of people visited here including the Zamindar, the owner of this Bagh – the Nawab and Local Kings. A woman gifted a Plum to Guruji and He sowed it in front of Chacha Phaggu mal Ji's residence. Few days surpassed and thus a tree emerged from the sowing.

Once, Guruji visited the area of Jaani Bazar and a large Sangat was established. Guruji himself laid the foundation stone of a Gurdwara here where propagation of Sikh Religion and the Sikh Codes and Principles could take place. On the 21st day of His stay, Guruji began to depart from Chacha Phaggu Mal Ji's residence. The Sangat with tear filled eyes urged Guruji,

“Sachche Patshah Ji, please bestow us with one of His signatures to which we will worship as a memory of Yours”.

Getting contented with their earnest prayers, Guruji gifted the Sangat with a pair of His Kharvan. Currently, at the residence of Chacha Phaggu Mal Ji stands a magnificent Guru Ghar entitled Gurudwara Chacha Phaggu Mal Sahib Ji which was constructed by Baba Harbans Singh Ji (Kar Sewa Wale) of New Delhi.

In this Gurdwara, the pair of Guru Ji's Kharvan, the stone chair on which Guruji used to take bath, the bed on which Guruji rested, the door from which Guruji entered measuring, the 76 beads Simran Mala of Nanakshahi Sant Chacha Phaggu Mal Ji and more than 350 years Old Plum Tree is still prevalent in the Gurdwara and the Gurdwara Premises. At the garden of Nawab Khankhah where Guruji established a Sikh Sangat stands Gurdwara Purana Guru ka Bagh.

In this Gurdwara premises, the platform/altar where Guruji sat, the old tree to which Guruji tied His horse and the old well are still existent and can be observed. At Jaani Bazar, where the foundation stone of the Gurdwara was placed by Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Himself, stands Gurdwara Bari Purani Sangat which is administered by Mohna (Clean Shaven Sonar Sikhs) and is partially non-functional now. The devout Sikhs have lost their Sikhi Appearance soon after the 1984 Sikh Genocide. The Gurdwara though stands intact is partly non-functional.

Above and beyond, in this Jaani Bazar there persists a longstanding residence of Zamindar Tekmal Singh. Legend prevails that this family descended on the soil of Sasaram around the year 1856 from Punjab. At this moment in time, the fifth generation of this family is prevailing who have the possession of an Old Handwritten Bīr of Satguru Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Maharaj having 1640 pages and a sphere of Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji which He had bestowed on their ancestors as a Blessing.

Moreover, there is an interesting document penned in Persian with the Local Govt. of Sasaram, which reveals that

“Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Maharaj was granted the Right to Levy Octroi Tax at different rates on various types of goods and merchandise that passed by the road, which was quite adjacent to the Sangat of Satguru Ji. The right of levying Octroi duty continued to be enjoyed by the succeeding Udaasin Mahant till the year of 1802 AD”.

From Sasaram, Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Maharaj ensued towards Gaya where He rested adjacent to Vishnupad Temple. It was the same place where Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj had visited earlier and composed the Shabad in Rag Asa. The priests of this temple visited Guruji and urged Him thus with all greed,

“Your ancestral souls have not attained liberation. Offer barley rolls and some Dakshina to go through this ritual”.

Guruji smiled and reuttered the Rag Asa composed by Sahib Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj at the same place, the second Ashtpadi of Sukhmani Sahib and a Shabad from Bhagat Kabir Ji’s Bani in a motive to show the path of the True Lord to the Brahmins. Guruji even advised His Sikhs here,

“Always be cautious about the deceitful tactics employed by the Brahmins and remember the True Lord. Utter His name to attain liberation. The Naam Simran is the only method to attain bliss in this Kalyug”.

Currently at this place adjacent to Vishnupad Temple stands Gurdwara Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji commemorating the visit of Satguru Ji. In this Gurdwara, there are three copies of Satguru Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Maharaj in Gurmukhi and Devanagari script which are seated side by side in the Darbar Hall.

Ensuing from Gaya, Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Maharaj reached Patna Sahib where He and His family were accorded a hearty welcome by His Sikhs. On reaching Patna, Guruji at first hurried to Bhagat Jaitmal Ji’s residence who was 350 years old then at the epoch of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji’s visit to his residence.

As Guruji had assured him that a cow would come and bath him in the form of River Ganga and He would come in His 9th Birth to liberate him, thus happened. At that epoch, Bhagat Jaitmal Ji was residing in village Bishambarpur. At the instance when Guruji arrived nearby to Bhagat Jaitmal Ji’s residence, the Sangat ran to inform Bhagat Jaitmal Ji regarding the arrival of the Benevolent Master.

But all the doors were closed as neighbouring children and young were making a noise which generated hindrance in his worship. Only a window was open through which the Sangat conveyed to Bhagat Jaitmal Ji,

“Bhagat Ji, Guruji has arrived. Now, please open the door”.

Bhagat Jaitmal Ji responded,

“If it is truth that Guruji has arrived, then He can come in without opening the door. He doesn’t need any means of entrance to get in”.

Hearing this, Guruji with his family and Sangat ride on the horse and went inside through the open window in incredible way. He tied his horse with the rope and got seated on Thara Sahib of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji. Bhagat Jaitmal Ji saw Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj in the form of Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji. Seeing Him Bhagat Jaitmal Ji got freedom from mortal world according to the spiritual words of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj.

Thamm Sahib are the historical pillars in Gurudwara Gau Ghat, after last ritual of Bhagat Jaitmal Ji, Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur ji started to rebuild that old house and ordered the labours as penned beneath,

“Construct the house as early as possible. I have to go Assam for Raja Ram Singh. He needs my help”.

Labours responded,

“Guruji the Thamm (Pillar) which You had brought to fix below the roof are short, arrange us another long Thamm so that we could complete the construction in time”.

Next day Guruji said to the labours,

“Look at the Thamm. They are not short”.

When labours tried to fix the thumb then Thamm turned long and when put again on the earth Thamm became short. Labours were amazed to see that. With a grin on face, Guru Ji ordered the labours,

“Leave that construction incomplete. A time would come when Sikh Sangat would itself complete this construction. Now these Thamm would be known as Thamm Sahib. If a person with complete faith embraces these Thamm, then his wish will be fulfilled. Incurable people will be cured and the mothers who don’t have child, their desires will be fulfilled”.

Post to this, Salas Rai the devout disciple of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj who had transformed his residence to a Guru Ghar, persisted the descendant of his servant Adharka named Ghan Shyam who was fortunate to meet Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Maharaj. To commemorate the visit of Guruji, the devout Sikhs

engaged themselves in the construction of a magnificent edifice, the foundation-stone of which was laid by the Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Himself.

They made excellent arrangements for the stay of Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Maharaj and his family. A devout lady, who is addressed as Bibi Paidi Bai in Guruji's Hukumnamas looked after Mata Nanki Ji and especially to Mata Gujri Ji who was pregnant. After a comprehensive study of the Hukumnamas of Guruji, the following names occur from the list of Guruji's devout Sikhs –

Bhai Dayal Daas, Raja Fateh Chand Maini, Bhai Chain Sukh, Bhai Maher Chand, Bhai Subha Chand, Bhai Jait Mal, Bhai Dedh Mal, Bhai Nand Kumar, Bhai Din Dayal, Bhai Pran Nath, Bhai Hira Nand, Bhai Gayo Das, Bhai Prahlad Das, Bhai Bansi Dhar, Bhai Murlidhar, Bhai Mohan Das, Bhai Nain Sukh, Bhai Hari Kesh, Bhai Chabeel Das, Bhai Bhagwan Das, Bhai Gujar Mal, Bhai Sadanada, Bhai Ghan Shyam, Bhai Kawal Nain, Bhai Ram Rai, Bhai Murli Dhar, Bhai Krishan Das, Bhai Singha, Bhai Sangat Das, Bhai Baaj Nath, Bhai Sukh Deo, Bhai Jhabar Singh, Bhai Jag Maan, Bhai Rupa and many others. The most prominent devout Sikhs of Guruji were Bhai Dayal Daas Ji, Bhai Mati Daas and Bhai Sati Daas Ji.

Among these devout Sikhs, Guruji appointed Bhai Dayal Daas Ji as the Incharge of all the Manji established in East India including the state of Uttar Pradesh.

The family got settled in the edifice newly constructed by the Sikh Sangat by transforming the residence of the devout pious soul Salas Rai Ji and soon after entrusting his mother, Mata Nanki Ji and wife Mata Gujri Ji, who was pregnant, to the care of his brother-in-law, Bhai Kirpal Chand Ji, Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Maharaj ensued towards the state of Assam, the details of which have been furnished in my penned book **“The Sikh History of Assam”**.

Guruji's next destination was Danapur. Legend prevails that here a woman persisted who got to know of Guruji's visit. Her joy knew no bounds and she cooked rice and pulses in an earthen pot. Guruji was very much pleased by the devotion and had the food prepared by the lady. From Danapur, Guruji ensued towards Barh and reached Munger. Guruji is known to have stayed in Belan Bazar area near the Munger fort on the Piparpanti Road. In His few days stay here in a Temple, a cot and a pillow were the only belongings of Guruji.

The historical records claim that Guruji got the news that Satguru Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj is born. Legend prevails that from here Guruji wrote a letter to his wife Mata Gujri Ji at Patna, who was awaiting the delivery of their expected child. As fate would have it the child was a male to whom they named as Gobind Rai. Kalgidhar Patshah describes His own birth in Sri Dasam Granth Sahib Ji as penned beneath,

“Tahi Humra Parkas Bhayo || Patna Seher Bikhe Bhav Layo”

Satguru Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji followed on and reached Bhagalpur. This place was earlier visited by Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj and had already established Bari Sangat and Chhoti Sangat. Guru Maharaj stayed at Bari Sangat on Barahanath Ghat

and used to sit on a stone slab. Guru Sahib also visited Chhoti Sangat, stationed a few distances apart from the Bari Sangat on Barahanath Ghat.

From Bhagalpur, Guruji ensued towards Sahibganj. In Sahibganj, Guruji rested at the same place where Satguru Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj stayed during His Udasi. As described earlier, Gurdwara Guru Nanak Sat Sangh Sabha is in a wrecked condition but the Nishan Sahib at the top of the Gurdwara Sahib is suggestive that years ago, it was certainly under the control of Gur Khalsa Sangat. I also accomplished to restore an ancient photograph of the Gurdwara Sahib as well as the Govt. Land Record.

Passing through Colgong, Guruji reached Lakshmipore and visited the same place which was earlier visited by Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj and stayed here for few days while travelling towards Assam. At this place currently stands Itihaasik Gurdwara Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Ji where Hukumnama of Kalgidhar Pita Sahib Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj, Puratan Shastar and a Handwritten Saroop of Satguru Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji discovered from the River Ganga are present as relics in this Historical Shrine of Satguru Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Maharaj.

An interesting fact regarding this Handwritten Saroop of Satguru Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Maharaj is that even after getting it discovered from the depths of the Ganga River, it was still intact and fresh as it should be while on terrestrial. Here in Lakshmipore, persisted a Gur Sikh whose name connotes to Sardar Mangal Singh Ji (Ram Singh as well). He was a devout Sikh of Kalgidhar Patshah Sahib Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj and was present at Abchal Nagar (Nanded) at the epoch when there occurred the Sachkhand Gaman of Dashmesh Pita Ji. He prepared a historical manuscript in which he has mentioned each and every single instance which has occurred at that tenure.

The digitalized version of this entire manuscript of eight pages is suggestive that it has been inscribed in Larivaar Gurmukhi which is too difficult for the present readers to comprehend. Hence, the content if simplified one can scrutinise that the exact time of attack on Guruji, the name of the assassin and various other events of that instance in detail along the names of the persons present. Also, it mentions the verses of Dasam Bani which had been uttered on the occasion of Dasam Patshah's Jyoti Jyot.

History also prevails that Guruji visited the same province of Raj Mahal which was earlier visited by Satguru Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj. On excavating this site, I came across two of the stones with Sikhi Inscriptions. On a large slab of stone, Mool Mantar has been inscribed and on a small slab of stone, it has been mentioned as "Guru Nanak Shahi Sangat, Zilla – Raj Mahal".

In the year 1669, i.e., in His return journey, when Guruji reached Patna by travelling through West Bengal and Odisha, He stayed in a dry garden, belonging to Nawab Rahim Bakhsh and Karim Bakhsh of Patna. The details of Guruji's visit to West Bengal and Odisha have been mentioned in my books – **"The Sikh History of Odisha"** and **"The Sikh History of West Bengal"**. The Nawab offered the garden to Guruji after observing his super-natural powers. Here exists Gurdwara Guru ka Bagh. This return visit of

Guruji to Patna was the longest halt in Patna as He re-joined His family and saw for the first time His son – Gobind Rai Ji.

While parting, Guruji instructed His family in the following manner,

“Continue staying here for some days and return to Punjab when you receive my message to depart and time lag for my arrival at Lakhnaur, near Ambala. I am departing to Delhi with the company of Nawab Saif Khan”.

Ensuing a few distances apart, Guruji halted at Rakabganj where persists a Gurdwara commemorating His visit. The unique aspect of this Gurdwara relies in the fact that there is a Handwritten Saroop of Satguru Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Maharaj of 1936 Ang which is noted to be completely distinct from all the Handwritten Saroop prevailing till date. In the last Ang of this Saroop of Satguru Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Maharaj, a small Rehat Maryada is observed which states the activities from which a Sikh should refrain from. Further scrutiny must be made on the contents of this Saroop of Guru Maharaj.

Apart from the above-mentioned places related to Satguru Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Maharaj, few locals approached me by stating that there is a village named Nizamabad in Bihar. History prevails that Guruji also visited this village where a Muslim has transformed himself to a devout Sikh of Guru Sahib. Still his descendants are prevailing in a muddy cottage who are blessed with a Handwritten Saroop of Satguru Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Maharaj. The reverence and devotion which this Islamic Family possess towards Guru Sahib is certainly Praiseworthy.

The family sleeps on floor, post to the Sukhasan of Guru Sahib on their own bed. The entire family has been following the custom of offering the cooked food to Guru Sahib prior to their own intake. Every day, the family does the Parkash of Guru Sahib, though not able to recite the Bani present in the Ang. Being Muslims, such attributes of this family sets a specimen for the society to attest that Sikhi is an universal religion and the Sikh Gurus were not only for Hindus, Muslims or Sikhs, rather they were Jagat Gurus.

Henceforth, the True and the Benevolent Master departed towards Delhi where He halted at Bhai Kalyan Ji's Residence. This was His second visit to the state of Delhi. The details pertaining to the Delhi Sikh History have been mentioned in my book entitled “The Sikh History of Delhi” which has been authenticated by Sardar Surinder Pal Singh Samana, the Incharge of S.G.P.C. Sikh Mission, Delhi (A unit of Dharam Parchar Committee, Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Sri Amritsar) bearing its office at Gurdwara Rakabganj Sahib, New Delhi.

Then it was Kalgidhar Pita Sahib Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj who turned the Sikh Historicity of this state more profound. Legend prevails that a Muslim saint Bhikhan Shah resided in a village adjacent to the city of Karnal in Haryana. He had meditated on the True Lord for a long time and performed a lot of penance. People thought that he was God Himself in human form. He got the news of the birth of Gobind Rai Ji while he was absorbed in deep meditation in his own village.

During his meditation he saw a beam of light and the Image of a new-born child. He realized that a holy man, beloved of the Lord had come to this world. The beam of light came from the East. With his mind's eye he saw Gobind Rai Ji, the newly born child at Patna in the house of Salas Rai. Bhikhan Shah was a Sufi saint. He decided to have a glimpse of the divine child. He asked his disciples,

“Look after the monastery. I have to leave towards east at the earliest”.

Accompanied by a few close associates, he embarked upon a journey to the East. After walking on foot for hundreds of miles, at last he reached Patna. There he made enquiries regarding the family of the holy child. Everybody in the city knew the location of Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji's mansion. He reached the Guru Sahib's abode without much difficulty.

He requested to have a glimpse of the holy face of the divine child. With great affection, uncle Kirpal Chand brought the child to the door. By that time a large number of the disciples of Guru Sahib had also gathered. They too wished to see the child. Bhikhan Shah bowed to the child in deep reverence and placed all the gifts that he had brought before the child. He had also brought two tiny earthen vessels. Holding these in both hands he took these to the child.

To the amazement of his disciples as well as Bhikhan Shah the Gobind Rat placed his tiny hands on both the vessels. Overwhelmed with reverence, Bhikhan Shah once again bowed and touched the feet of the blessed child. When Bhikhan Shah came out, his disciples as well as the members of the congregation requested the Sufi saint to explain the riddle of the earthen vessels. He said,

“When the idea flashed across my mind that God in human form had come down to earth, I felt that the holy child will side either with the Hindus or the Muslims. I thought if the blessed child supports the Hindus, He would destroy the Muslims. With this doubt in mind, I got these two vessels made and placed these before Gobind Rai Ji.

But the holy child embodies the divine spirit of the Creator Himself. He has answered my question by indicating that he will come to the rescue of both. I have fully realized that this child shall fight against tyranny and uproot it completely. He will help those devout Hindus and Muslims who will stand for truth and justice”.

Soon the people in the entire country got to know of this incident. People in large numbers flocked to Patna to have a glimpse of this wonderful child who was in fact the embodiment of the divine light.

During the very first month of his childhood all were amply convinced that young Gobind Rai Ji was not an ordinary child. Ordinarily the children cry when they feel hungry or are placed in the cradle by their mothers. But this divine child would never cry. A fascinating smile ever played on His lovely face. He lovingly smiled at whosoever called him by His name.

Ordinary children bend their back while learning to crawl. But unlike them Young Gobind Rai Ji would crawl without bending his back. While sitting He learnt to crawl. He learnt to walk effortlessly. Unlike other children, he would never falter. He was very different from other children. Everyone felt that the child had extraordinary self-confidence. The way he learnt to crawl and walk clearly indicated that he was an unusual and extraordinary child.

When He was three years of age, He used to gather children from the neighbourhood and distribute his own toys amongst them. He would organize them into groups and teach them to march and He Himself would lead them. He was fond of making the children form a column and march together like men in the army.

His uncle Kirpal Chand remained with Him to keep watch over His activities. Once He went to a riverbank to play with children and entered the river. When the uncle saw Gobind Rai Ji in the river, he was frightened. But soon he saw the child swimming ashore. When he narrated the whole incident to Mata Gujri Ji, she was worried but uncle Kirpal Chand told her not to worry and said,

“Gobind Rai Ji has learnt how to swim in the Heaven itself. He is destined to give deliverance to millions of people; no river has the capacity to drown Him”.

As a child Gobind Rai Ji was exceptionally handsome. He fascinated one and all. His mother and grandmother would dress Him in the finest clothes. His mother had longed to have a son for years. Naturally, she showered affection on Him and lovingly looked after Him. Many rich residents of Patna were devotees of Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji. Wealthy ladies used to present beautiful clothes and toys to Guruji's child. His mother loved to see her son getting grown into a strong handsome young man. She would make Gobind Rai don a small turban.

Once a woman devotee brought a plume (kalgi) made of feathers studded with precious pearls. Mala Gujri Ji liked the plume and attached it to Young Gobind Rai Ji's turban. Donning it, the child went out to play. Since then, the people started calling him lord of the Plume (Kalgidhar).

It was the talk of the town that the son of Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji had divine powers. Whatever He said came out to be true. All desires of the devotees blessed by Him were fulfilled. Devotees started flocking to Him to ask for boons.

One day some women disciples came to Young Gobind Rai Ji. They expressed their admiration for Him. They told Him that among them was a woman who had a keen desire to have a child and prayed Gobind Rai to bless her. The beloved child said,

“If she is destined to become a mother; she will give birth to a child. Why should I say something regarding this”?

Once again that woman came to Gobind Rai in the company of other women. She prayed to be blessed by Him. Mala Gujri Ji called the beloved child and said,

“She is a devotee of your revered father. Bless her that she begets a child”.

Young Gobind Rai Ji responded,

“How can she get blessings in this way? She owns a fleet of boats. She should give one to me. She would be blessed with not one but five sons”.

He touched her head with a stick that He earned at that time. She went home and spoke to her husband and presented a beautiful boat to Young Gobind Rai Ji. As time passed, she became the mother of five sons.

A poor woman used to live in the neighbourhood. She would make a living by spinning thread. She was very poor. Young Gobind Rai Ji playfully scattered her cotton balls and the thread spun by her. When He played this mischief for the second time the poor woman went to Mata Gujri Ji and complained against Him. Mata Gujri Ji gave a lot of money to compensate. Showering blessings on her she would leave. This happened many times. Once Mata Gujri Ji asked,

“Dear Lal Ji, why do you play mischief on this poor woman?”

Young Gobind Rai Ji smiled and responded,

“What you give her is much more than what she earns labouring for months”.

Mata Gujri Ji understood why He was indulging in that playful mischief. Pundit Shiv Dutt used to meditate on the banks of river Ganges. One day while he was completely absorbed in meditation, he felt that the child Gobind Rai Ji playing with other children on the banks of the river was not any ordinary child by eyeing that the child threw his golden bangles into the river claiming them to be worthless.

He thought there was something divine about Him. He was the very incarnation of the Lord. Once he saw that the child pushed a leper into the river. When the leper came out of the river, he was fully cured. Pundit Shiv Dutt turned to be one of the greatest devotees of Young Gobind Rai Ji. Here persists Gurdwara Kangan Ghat Sahib commemorating the above-mentioned Historical Fact.

Fateh Chand Maini, a rich landlord of the city came to the riverbank along with his wife to meet Pundit Shiv Dutt. They urged him,

“Please pray for us to the Almighty so that He may bless us with a son. We have so much property but we have no child who may inherit it.”

Pundit Shiv Dutt responded,

“I have prayed many times for you but my prayers have not been answered. Lord's own child is now in the city. He is the son of 9th Sikh Guru – Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji. The Lord has bestowed on Him all spiritual and worldly powers. Remember Him, He will fulfil all your desires. He is the beloved child of the True Lord”.

From then on, Fateh Chand and his Wife would think of Gobind Rai Ji all the time. Devotedly they meditated on Him. One day the beloved child along with his other

friends went to the house of Fateh Chand. He sat in the lap of Fateh Chand's wife when she was absorbed in meditation and said,

“Mother”

She opened her eyes, had a glimpse of child's divine face and felt that she had been blessed. She was overjoyed. A deep sense of contentment overwhelmed her. Child Gobind Rai Ji played another prank. He said,

“Mother I am hungry Right now”.

Fateh Chand's wife rushed to her husband and asked him to fetch sweets and fruits. But Child Gobind Rai Ji said,

“I don't want sweets and fruits. Please give me the food which you cooked”.

She brought Puri (fried loaves) and gram. Child Gobind Rai Ji distributed these among his friends. The child and his friends would visit her house frequently and eat fried gram and Puri. Fateh Chand and his wife's desire for a son were fulfilled in this way. Their spiritual longing was also satisfied.

They turned their residence into a Gurdwara. which is called Gurdwara Maini Sangat. Puri and grams are served to the devotees in this Gurdwara.

Pundit Shiv Dutt was a devotee of the Thakur. At dawn he would place the idols of the Thakur on the banks of the river and offer worship. When he realized that God himself had sent the child Gobind Rai Ji to this earth, he started meditating on Him. He would have a glimpse of the child during the course of his meditation. Keeping in view his dedication, child Gobind Rai Ji used to come to the banks of the river in the early morning hours and enable Pundit Shiv Dutt to see him.

On the days when Child Gobind Rai Ji did not come to the riverbank, Pundit Shiv Dutt would visit the Gurdwara Maini Sangat in the evening to have a glimpse of the Divine Form. If he failed to find the child even there, he would go to the abode of Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji. He would lie and would never return to his home without paying homage to child.

Other Brahmins were angry with him for deserting the rituals and portraying devotion to child Gobind Rai Ji. However, Shiv Dutt did not pay heed to their protests and stayed happy, contented and blessed. The riverbank where the Guru Sahib used to come to see Shiv Dutt is known as Gobind Ghat.

There were two brothers Rahim Baksh and Karim Baksh who used to reside in Patna. They had a lot of property in and around the city. They owned many business establishments. People used to address them as Nawab. When Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji visited Patna Sahib, He was fascinated by the seclusion of their orchard and stayed there. Guru Sahib thought that the orchard was suitable for meditation. The trees in this orchard were withering.

But the moment the Guru Sahib entered the orchard these trees became green once again. Thinking that Lord loved Guru Sahib, the Nawab became his devotees. When Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji left for Assam, the two brothers looked after his family. They felt that Guru Sahib was a Prophet.

They were very unhappy on the eve of the departure of child Gobind Rai Ji from Patna Sahib. The child told them to ask for some boon. They said,

“We long to look at your divine visage.”

The child said,

“My father had told you to recite Jap ji every day in the morning. Please recite it with full devotion and you will see me.”

The brothers donated a village and the orchard for the upkeep of the Langar. To this day these comprise the property of the Gurdwara Sahib at Patna.

Jagta Seth was a prominent businessman of Patna. He had his business establishments all over the country. He possessed immense wealth but he had no issue. He manled thrice to beget a son who could inherit all his wealth. When Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji visited Patna, he served Guru Sahib with complete dedication and devotion. He used to attend the holy assemblies daily.

As he listened to the singing of Shabad and discourse of Guru Sahib, he would feel happy and contented. He thought

“If Guru Sahib blesses me with a son. My desire to have an heir to my property will be fulfilled”.

Once, Guru Sahib called him and gave him three apples. He felt satisfied and on reaching home he gave an apple to each of his wives. A year surpassed and his three wives gave birth to a son each. At that time Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji was away from Patna. He took his wives and the three sons to Mata Gujri Ji and presented a large number of toys and precious clothes to child Gobind Rai Ji.

He asked the child Gobind Rai Ji,

“What will you like to have”?

Child Gobind Rai Ji retorted,

“I would like to have a dagger, a bow and arrows”.

The Seth brought these and presented these to the beloved child. As long as the family of Guru Sahib stayed at Patna, he would visit them every day and offer precious gifts and feel happy. When the family of Guru Sahib was about to leave Patna, it was Jagta Seth who made arrangements for the comfortable stay of the members of the holy family at different places to look after their needs.

At the time of departure, he presented himself along with all the members of his family and said,

“How shall I be able to have a glimpse of you in your absence”?

Child Gobind Rai Ji responded,

“Attend the holy assembly every day and you shall find me there”.

Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji returned from Assam. He stayed at Patna Sahib for a few days and left for Anandpur. He asked the members of his family to continue staying there for some more time. When child Gobind Rai Ji was five years of age he would say,

“I won't stay here anymore. I wish to be with my father”.

On getting a message from the Guru that the holy family should leave for Anandpur, preparations for the Journey were made. When people in the city & the devotees and the who dearly loved the family of Guru Sahib, came to know of the impending departure of the holy family, they were crestfallen and unhappy. Whosoever came to bid farewell to the family was overwhelmed with sorrow. Raja Fateh Chand and his wife held the child Gobind Rai Ji in their arms and cried like the parents who get separated from their children.

Child Gobind Rai Ji gave a sword and dagger to them and said,

“Whenever you miss me, look at these. Serve my friends with food as you would serve me,”

After the Family's departure the Raja and his wife would affectionately invite his friends and serve them with Puri and fried grams. Pundit Shiv Dutt too was very unhappy. Child Gobind Rai Ji said to him,

“Every morning. as you offer prayers you will see me. You have attained the Divine salvation.”

He also reassured another devotee Jagta Bhagat and said,

“Lovingly recite Gurbani in the morning. Let the remembrance of the Lord be your mainstay. As you recite Gurbani, you shall find me sitting by side.”

The congregation made a supplication to child Gobind Rai Ji. He said to them,

“Am leaving behind my cradle. If you want to see me, look at the cradle. If you want to have a glimpse of my soul, come to the congregation at dawn and meditate on the True Lord”.

When the holy family left the city, a large number of devotees came to see them off. All of them were overwhelmed at the departure of Guru Sahib with their eyes moist with tears. The holy family left Patna Sahib and such a large number of devotees accompanied them that it appeared that as if a caravan was on the move. The beloved

child was carried on a palanquin, Mata Gujri Ji and Mata Nanki Ji were earned in litters. Others travelled in carriages driven by oxen.

Guruji along with His family thus ensued and the devotees accompanied the party up to Danapur. On the way they continued singing hymns. Danapur was situated at a distance of twenty miles from Patna Sahib. Jagta Seth had a business establishment there. He had made arrangements for the comfortable stay of the members of the holy family and all the devotees. But child Gobind Rai Ji said,

“When my father visited this place, a lady of this town cooked rice and lentils in an earthen pot and affectionately offered the food to him”.

When child Gobind Rai Ji said this, the same lady came there and said,

“I have cooked rice and pulses in the same earthen pot for you in which I had cooked the porridge for your father Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji. For the rest of devotees, I have baked chapattis and pulses.”

The lady had carefully kept aside the earthen pot in which she had cooked the porridge for Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji. Child Gobind Rai Ji blessed the lady. The old lady converted her house into a Gurdwara Sahib which is still known as Gurdwara Handi Sahib (The Earthen Pot). Henceforth, accompanied by His family, Guruji ensued towards Varanasi, the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, the details of which have been mentioned comprehensively in my written book **“The Sikh History of Uttaranchal”**. The house of Salas Rai where Dashmesh Pita Sahib Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj was born, had already turned into a Guru Ghar by the Sangat.

Then it was Maharaja Ranjit Singh Ji who built a magnificent structure in Samvat 1896 and completed in Samvat 1898. This Guru Ghar is entitled as Takhat Shri Harimandar Ji Patna Sahib which commemorates the birth of Guru Pita. The Reconstruction of the present structure was taken up on the full moon day of Kartik, Samvat 2011 (corresponding to November 19, 1954 A.D.) and was completed on Posh 7, Samvat 2014 (1957 A.D.). Some notable British Dignitaries have mentioned about Takhat Sri Harimandar Ji Patna Sahib in the following aspects. The British Author – Charles Wilkins writes,

“I spent one hour on 1st of March, 1781 A.D. The whole building forms a square of about 40 feet, raised from the ground about 6 or 8 steps. The hall is in the centre, divided from 4 other apartments by wooden arches, upon pillars of the same materials, all neatly carved. The floor was covered with neat Carpet and furnished with 6 or 7 low desks, on which stood as many of the books of their law.

A little room which, as you enter, is situated to the left-hand end of the hall in the Chancel, and is furnished with an altar covered with a cloth of gold, upon which was laid a round black shield over a long, broad sword and on either side is a Chowri of peacock feathers, mounted in a silver handle. The altar was raised a little height above the ground, in a declining position.

Before it stood a low kind of throne plated with silver: flower pots and rose water bottles and on the left-hand stood three small urns which appeared to be of copper, furnished with notches to receive the donations of the charitable. There stood also near the altar, on a low desk, a great book of a folio size from which some portions are daily read in their Divine service.

It was covered over with a blue mantle on which were painted, in silver letters, some select passages of their law.”

The British Author – Dr. F Buchanan writes,

“The followers of Guru Nanak have at Patna, a place of worship of great repute. This is called the Hari Mandir which owes its celebrity to its having been the birthplace of Guru Gobind Singh, their last great teacher. The Hari Mandir which is in the city belongs to the Khalsa which the Sikhs call a Panth founded by Guru Gobind. The Khalsa are the originals who prevail in Bihar in the suburb called Rakabganj, a considerable place of worship”.

The British Author – Dr. Monier Williams writes,

“The temple dedicated to the Tenth Guru Govind at Patna was built by Ranjit Singh. On one side in a small recess supposed to be the actual room where Guru Govind was born more than two centuries where his garments, weapons, one of his bed and other relics are displayed to the visiting Sikh Sangat.”

The following relics are still preserved in the Takhat Sahib –

1. A Saroop of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Maharaj having the signature of Sahib Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj.
2. There were two Saroops of Sri Dasam Granth Sahib Ji which were sent by Kalgidhar Pita from Punjab along with some of His Shastar. One of the Saroop was written by Baba Deep Singh Ji which was sold few years back and the other Saroop was written by a Nanak Panthi Mahant known as Patna Wali Bir which is still preserved here and can be easily accessed.
3. A Chhabi Sahib – Painting of Sahib Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj.
4. A Pangura Sahib – Small cradle with 4 stands covered with gold plates on which Sahib Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj used to sit/sleep in His childhood days.
5. A small “Saif” sword of Sahib Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj.
6. Four Iron arrows of Sahib Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj.
7. An Earthen Round Goli of Sahib Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj.
8. A small iron Chakri of Sahib Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj.
9. A small iron Khanda of Sahib Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj.
10. A small iron Baghnakh Khanjar of Sahib Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj.
11. One wooden Comb of Sahib Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj.
12. Two iron Chakeras of Sahib Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj.
13. One pair of Ivory Sandals of Sahib Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj.

14. One pair of Sandalwood Sandals of 9th Sikh Guru – Satguru Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Ji Maharaj.
15. Three wooden spinning wheels of Sri Kabir Sahib Ji.
16. An ancient book containing Hukumnama of Satguru Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Ji Maharaj & Sahib Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj, some of the ancient pictures and paintings.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh Ji is also said to have reconstructed the other historical Gurdwaras around this Guru Ghar. The present management committee of Gurdwara Board – Takhat Shri Harimandar Ji Patna Sahib with Jathedar Gohar – E – Maskeen Singh Saab Gyani Ranjit Singh Ji is considered the best of all than the previous committee members who are relentlessly working for the establishments of Khalsa Raj in the state. It is noteworthy that S.G.P.C.B (Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Bihar) is working in this state and propagating the principles of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj – Kirat Karo, Vand Chako and Naam Japo by various Seva and Dharam Parchar activities.

Even the State Govt. of Bihar has extended mighty support to the Sikh Organisations in every step. I extend all my prayers and best wishes to the Govt. of Bihar, management committee of Gurdwara Board – Takhat Shri Harimandar Ji Patna Sahib and S.G.P.C.B (Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Bihar). All my gratitude and prayers for my dearest Singh Saab Gyani Ranjit Singh Ji Gohar – E – Maskeen, Jathedar of Takhat Shri Harimandar Ji Patna Sahib who has always guided me in every step of the researches, I have conducted on Sikh History till date.



CHAPTER - II

The Sikh History of Assam



An Antique Photograph of the Huge Stone Flung upon Satguru Sri Guru
Tegh Bahadur Sahib Ji Maharaj by the Chief Lady Tantric Scholar – Netai Dhobani
At Dhubri Sahib, Assam.



Dispur
19.06.2020

I am happy to know that Mr. Abinash Mahapatra, a young Sikh historian from Odisha, has written a book titled 'The Sikh History of Assam' that throws light on the rich Sikh ties with Assam.

As the book explores the origins of Sikh relationship with the state of Assam and the contribution of Sikh community in the formation of greater Assamese identity while spreading the teachings of Guru Nanak in this part of the country; it is imperative that the book would prove to be an invaluable chronicle of the journey of the Sikhs to these enchanted lands of Assam and their role in strengthening the cultural mosaic through Guru Saheb's ideals of peace, harmony and universal brotherhood.

On this occasion, I extend my best wishes to the author Mr. Abinash Mahapatra, who has written 38 books on Sikh history at a very young age, for the endeavour and hope that the book would be able to achieve the desired goals.

(SARBANANDA SONOWAL)



S. KULWANT SINGH

General Secretary,
Sikh Pratinidhi Board Eastern Zone,
Dhubri Saheb
Date: 02-06-2020

The Sikh Pratinidhi Board Eastern Zone, Dhubri Saheb, is immensely happy to learn that Shri Avinash Ji, a young Sikh historian from the state of Odisha, has extensively researched about the history of the Sikhs in the northeastern state of Assam, and come up with this wonderful book 'The Sikh history of Assam' which begins from Udisis of First Sikh Guru and founder of Sikh Faith, Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj, to the state of Assam.

It, is also worth mentioning that Shri Avinash Ji, at a young age of 22 years, has written 38 books on Sikh history, starting his research in Sikh history from a very tender age of 12 years, which shall serve as a source of inspiration, to the upcoming generations.

I, am also confident that this book will immensely help in creating awareness of the teachings of Guru Sahib and contribution of the Sikh community in Assam, since, the message of Guru Sahib is for all the people, of all times. The teachings of Guru Sahib still hold relevance and shall help pave way for a judgment-free clean world, and also create an environment of universal brotherhood.

Once again, myself, on behalf of the entire Board would like to thank Shri Avinash Ji, for taking this initiative to research and compile, the history of the Sikhs in Assam, and pray to the almighty WaheGuru Ji to bless Shri Avinash Ji, so that he can carry on with his good work, for the years to come.

S. Kulwant Singh

An Introduction to The Assam Sikh History

A treasure trove of natural beauty and diverse history, lending an immaculate, untouched aura that is sure to allure everyone, the land of wild forests, mighty rivers, and acres and acres of tea plantations, marked with rolling mountains and lush green valley known as 'The Land of the Blue Hills' with the majestic Brahmaputra river, magnificent hills and with its rich flora and fauna, the Indian state of Assam is the gateway to the enchanting and unexploited north-eastern part of the country.

The temple of Kamakhya being the Tantra Belt of the country, this place was osculated by Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj to shackle the blind faiths, fear and hypocrisy of the locals and save them from the shackles of the illiterate and greedy priests. Finding its mention as Asa Desh and Kamrup in Janam Sakhis, this region was ruled by Ahom King – Swarg Narayan when Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj visited this state. Chronological sequence of Guruji's travels in Assam can be marked by –

1. Dhubri
2. Gauripore
3. Jogigopha
4. Golpara District
5. Rangmatti
6. Golaghat
7. Dhanashri Valley
8. Kamakhya
9. Guwahati
10. Karimganj
11. Nazira
12. Majhuli
13. Kamrup
14. Hajo
15. Matsyadhwaaj
16. Tinsukia
17. Dibrugarh

Years later, this place was visited by various Nanak Panthis who took special care of the places related to Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj and established Dharamshala. Post to these events, Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Maharaj visited this state. Although not much places are associated to Guruji's visit but the following two places speaks evidently of Guruji's osculation to the state of Assam –

1. Dhubri
2. Kamakhya

Subsequently, the history of this state was discovered by Dashmesh Pita Satguru Dhan Dhan Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji's conversations with Mahant Jivan Das of Assam along the banks of Tapi River at Madhya Pradesh and the local Raja who presented an elephant, a large tent known as tambol and a Baaj to Him. Post to the Golden History of Sikh Gurus, it was Maharaja Ranjit Singh who played a vital role in helping the Ahom King Raja Chandrakanta to fight against Burmese invaders. The only lady who accompanied the troop of 500 soldiers was Mata Ji in whose memory we have a Gurdwara in this state along with some of her belongings. All these facts have been scrutinized in this book of mine entitled "The Sikh History of Assam".

My empathetic thankfulness to Sri Sarvananda Sonowal – The Hon. Chief Minister of Assam, Sardar Gurbinder Singh, all the office bearers of Sikh Pratinidhi Board, Eastern Zone and Mata Ji Gurdwara who have deliberately assisted me while I was researching on the Sikh History pertaining to the state of Assam. Based in Gurdwara Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Ji, Dhubri, Sikh Pratinidhi Board, Eastern Zone is the principle State Sikh Body of this state which is relentlessly working for the establishments of Khalsa Raj through innumerable Seva for the betterment of the Panth, Gurdwaras and the locals during the time of need. All my prayers and best wishes for this organisation.

The Sikh History of Assam

Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj stepped into the domain of Assam through Dhubri and sat on the banks of Brahmaputra River. Sardar Gurbinder Singh, a local resident of Dhubri serving as the manager of Gurdwara Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib stated that during Guruji's epoch, Dhubri was the utmost customary precinct of Assam during Guruji's Visit but the folks all around were found to be amalgamated in worldly inclinations.

Guruji instructed Bhai Mardana Ji to tune the Rabab and thus commenced His melodious Shabad. The locals were astounded by hearing to Guruji's Shabad and within a short span they were found surrounding Guruji like swarm of bees. Guruji's epoch of sojourn in this precinct corresponds to few days. After Guruji's departure, a Gurdwara was commemorated in the form of a Manji entitled – Gurdwara Shri Dam Dama Sahib meaning the Gurdwara commemorating the resting place of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj.

In Dhubri, there is a region entitled as Dhanpur which was sanctified by Guruji during His stay here. Legend prevails that Guruji used to carry a Barcha (Lance) with Him while He used to travel through the woods. In Dhanpur, Guruji struck His lance to the ground and instructed,

“A Pond should be dug at this place for the benefit of the Sangat”.

According to the wish of Guruji, a pond was dug at this place and currently, at this place persists Gurdwara Barcha Sahib commemorating the visit of Guruji.

From Dhubri, Guruji sauntered through Gauripore, Jogigopha, Golpara District, Rangmatti, Golaghat and following the route of Dhanashri River reached Dhanashri Valley. Here subsisted a tribe of anthropophagi and hence no one dared to enter this region. Traditional account of Guruji's visit to this zone prevails after having an encounter with Guruji, the anthropophagi surrendered themselves at His Holy Feet and sought refuge as His disciples. Guruji blessed them with the phenomena of Naam Simran and sauntered towards Kamakhya Temple.

Kamakhya Temple was and still is the principal centre of Tantra Theory and Practise in entire India is stationed on the Nihachal Hills. When Guruji reached around the premises of the temple, the Tantric Scholars who served as the priests of the temple started exhibiting various Tantra skills and spelled several charms but were surprised to see none of their artifices could affect Guruji. They realised Guruji's significance and assumed Him to be the embodiment of the Supreme Lord. One of the priests fell at Guruji's feet and turned His disciple.

The Priests of Kamakhya Temple surrendered at the Holy Feet of Guruji! This unanticipated news spread like a wild fire and hence, the king of this region – Raja Swarg Narayan rushed to have Darshan of Guruji. The benevolent Master showed the path of worshipping the True Lord apart from idol worship and charms. The king and his officials along with his family turned themselves to be Guruji's disciples. Guruji didn't endure in this expanse for long and sauntered towards the present-day state capital of Guwahati.

Hereafter sauntering from Guwahati, Guruji traversed through Karimganj and reached Nazira previously entitled as Gharagaon. In Nazira, Guruji met Srimanta Shankar Dev for second time. The first meeting of Guruji and Srimanta Shankar Dev had happened in Parshuram Kund stationed at present – day state of Arunachal Pradesh. I have penned a detailed documentary of this meeting in my penned book – “The Sikh History of Arunachal Pradesh”.

Even a saint from Dhaka, Bangladesh – Lunia about whom I have mentioned in my inscribed book – “The Sikh History of Bangladesh” was a great follower of Guruji and used to propagate Guruji’s philosophy met Him here for second time and breathed his last. Even at extant, we can notice his sepulchre contemporary in this precinct just in front of a cow shed on the banks of the river Dikhow. According to local historical sources, the place Nazira was earlier known as Nanak Zira which means discussion with Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj. As the time surpassed, this region came to be entitled as Nazira.

Legend prevails that while crossing through the forests, Guruji has met Kauda Rakshasa (The Cannibal – Man Eater) in Assam. It so happened Guruji was resting and Bhai Mardana Ji was moving in whereabouts. Kauda took Bhai Mardana Ji by surprise and bounded his hand and foot by a rope and then carried him to the spot where he had kept a big pan full of oil for frying the flesh of his victims.

Kauda started to lighten fire under the pan. When Bhai Mardana Ji saw Kauda preparing to butcher him, he was very frightened and prayed to Guru Ji to come to his rescue. The all-knowing Guru realized what was happening to Bhai Mardana Ji. He started walking towards Kauda’s place in order to rescue Mardana. Kauda was trying to light the fire when Guru Ji appeared in front of him.

Kauda was completely bewildered. He went towards the Guru and tied him as well. He lit the fire and within minutes the oil was burning hot. Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji said that he wants be the first one to be fried. Kauda was astonished and surprise. He had never seen anyone like Guruji before. Kauda carried on his routine and lifted Guru Ji to be put him in the big pan. When the Guru’s feet touched the hot oil, it became cold as ice.

Kauda then knew that Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji was not an ordinary person. Guru Ji looked at Kauda with compassion and graciously and said,

“Kauda! You do not realize what you are doing. Would you cast yourself in the burning fire of hell?”

Kauda, whose conscience was dead with heinous crimes, suddenly came to realization and was overwhelmed with repentance. The very gracious and holy sight of the divine Guru made him realize his guilt and he fell at Guruji’s feet and begged for mercy. The gracious Guru blessed him with Naam, the meditation on the Name of God. Kauda changed entirely and thereafter lived as a devout disciple of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji. He became an honest person and a devotee of God.

From Nazira, Guruji sauntered towards Majhuli and reached Kamrup. Here persists the famous encounter of Guruji with the magical expert Noor Shah. A comprehensive study of the Sikh historical sources suggests that it was here Bhai Mardana Ji was apprehended by Noor Shah (a chief magician) of this province. I quote this instance from Sri Guru Nanak Chamatkar by Bhai Vir Singh Ji which I find the most depictive –

Bhai Mardana Ji spoke (to himself),

I don't understand why Guruji said to me,

'Don't go to the town, stay with me'.

When he intended to leave, then I told him,

This place is good. We sleep on time. We eat on time. We may stay here for some more time.

He said,

“No. There is some urgent work. We have to break a big house of deceit. We must go. We should move quickly”.

At that time, he did not listen at all. In the city lot of people had become Guru-disciples and many rich people had become Lord-loving. Everybody had so much regard that they had tears in their eyes when they came to know that the Guru wished to depart. But he insisted and departed, saying, we have to break a house of deceit. It is urgent.

Now, we have come here and are staying in the forest for the last three days where there is no food and no water even. He is 'All powerful' godly soul. But, what could I do? This hunger is making me suffer. Secondly, I become nervous very quickly. No doubt, I am his close companion and beneficiary of his grace and I know he is a godly soul but I become nervous quickly and I become afraid.

When I Cull hungry, then I feel irritated. I do not give him proper respect. Sometimes I do give but sometimes I forget. Being so close to him and getting into fear is a pain that is more than the pain of hunger. When we met Salis Rai in Patna, then he explained how people are suffering because they do not value anything properly. They do not appreciate properly; they do not recognize properly. At that time, I had made a promise to myself that I shall not be afraid again. I will see him as a godly soul and remain happy in whatever happens.

But alas! The thin milk that I have drunk, I become nervous again and again. Now, the hunger of three days has killed me. What should I do? Waheguru, somehow, I should also win over this hunger and thirst. Maybe, then I will surely go by his wish and won't get nervous. Once he had sung a verse.

Bhai Mardana Ji kept talking to himself:

O Mardana, God bless you. Remember what you sang yesterday. The frog lives in water where the lotus is, but he does not drink the nectar of the lotus. He is happy with the scum. The black bees come from a distance and drink the nectar. Yes, this verse is for me only. I live with the godly soul but like the frog I am after food, water and worldly comforts. like the frog I do not drink the godly nectar. I do not become a black bee on the lotus. But what should I do? Waheguru your ways are strange. How can a person sing the divine songs when his throat is choked with hunger? No, but he should become a black bee and sacrifice himself on the lotus.

See, Mardana, your mom got five sons and they died. When you were born, she thought, "Even this child will die. He has come only to make my body suffer. This child will give me some sentimental joy and die". So, she named you 'Destined to die'. O ugly named, 'Destined to die', when you played and sang with Guru Nanak, then the benevolent and heavenly Guru changed your ugly name and named you Mardana (a strong man) and said to my mom,

"O fortunate lady, your 'Destined to die' son, I have named him Mardana (a strong man). He will not live as per your deeds, but he will live on the blessings of the holy people who will listen to the soul-awakening Lord's praises from him. He will live and he will be a trigger of the gun of life spark".

O 'Destined to die' why don't you sacrifice yourself on the Guru who has given your life, who has given you a life spark and awakened your sleeping soul and who has made you an ideal man, without whom you cannot live even for a while, in whom you see the Lord, why don't you sacrifice yourself at his name? Ah! My heart is going to collapse. Which door should I knock for food? If I had been patient, then maybe God would have sent food from the heavens. Now, I am roaming from door to door for food.

How strange is this city? O God! Women and women, in the fields are women at the shops are women. How are they staring? No blessed woman says,

"O tired traveller, have food".

They stare and stare. I hope I won't be influenced by their evil eyes. But how could I be influenced? The benevolent Guru is my support. Oh! What is that? The entire market is quiet. Oh! What a temple? All doors are closed. Oh! The statue of a lion, so fearful it is? Oh! Is there a pair of lions standing or is it a statue? Oh! How the walls are painted black and blue? Oh! Somebody is looking down from the window up there. She is going to say,

"O brother, have food".

Let me wait. Oh! Nobody has uttered a word. Nobody has said,

"Eat something".

O.K. Let me go ahead. But my steps are not moving. What is happening? Maybe there is no strength in me because I am hungry. No, I have enough strength to walk, but then why my steps are becoming dull? Mardana, be brave, the Guru told you,

"Wait for some time, don't go to the city".

When I insisted, then, he said,

"Be careful, keep yourself alert. Keep yourself in high spirits. Your mind is very delicate. You are master of a subdued art. Your heart is so soft that you might get into trouble. If you are going, then remain in high spirits".

Oh! My high spirits are gone. My steps are not moving. Well! How will the high spirits remain when one is hungry? (Gave a blow to his stomach with his fist). Oh! My stomach, I am expressing reservation to my beloved Guru. Can a hungry person remain in high spirits? Yes, upon the Guru's words. That is why he said,

"Remain in high spirits".

If a hungry person could not remain in high spirits, then why would the Guru say so? And it is evident. The Guru himself is hungry but he is in high spirits. Yes, the Guru is right and I am in the wrong.

Meanwhile while Bhai Mardana Ji was speaking to himself, one door of that dreaded house opened, but who opened could not be seen. Bhai Mardana Ji looked inside. There was a veranda and further an empty courtyard. But then it appeared that a sheet is spread and a plate full of fried rice is lying there and steam is coming out and a slight fragrance of saffron and orange is being felt. Hurriedly, he went in. The moment he entered; the door closed. Who closed the door and could not be seen? Although he noticed the closing of the door without anybody visible closing it, but being attracted by the fragrance from the plate, he went ahead. There was no

plate lying anywhere. It was a courtyard and on one side from a peg was hanging a full-size skeleton of a human body. For a moment he felt afraid but then he said, Waheguru, and felt a bit relaxed.

He had hardly felt relaxed that he looked towards another veranda where he saw two lion cubs near two pillars. They were staring at the newly arrived guest. Now again he got afraid but even in the fear it struck his mind to check whether the lion cubs were tied to the pillars or not? Luckily, he finds them tied. That gave him some courage but his steps did not move further and he stood there a bit satisfied. Now, suddenly there was a flurry near his feet. He saw two cobras went past his feet, hissing. Mardana was dazed. Neither he was fully conscious, nor he was unconscious, nor he moved aside to save himself, nor he moved back out offer. Neither he felt safe where he was standing, nor he felt safe to move forwards or backwards.

He felt giddy and his eyes closed. In bewilderment he opened his eyes. The snakes had vanished. The lion cubs were gone. On a table, was lying a plate full of fried rice and fragrance was spreading. One slim and beautiful girl came and kept a glass full of water on the table. Another came and kept a chair for Bhai Mardana Ji to sit. Another one came and kept a glass full of milk on the table. Neither anyone talked, nor made any gesture. It appeared like a puppet show. Now, Mardana saw behind. The door was locked. The peg was there but there was no skeleton there. One sheet was hanging. He looked all round but there was nothing that was strange or would cause fear. Now, his appetite that had gone down out of fear returned and the smell of the fragrance from fried rice became very strong. He sat down. He said, O great Guru Nanak, and ate to his fill. Many delicious dishes came and he enjoyed. He said:

This city is of quiet people. Nobody talks, even gestures. Waheguru! Save me. I hope nobody is playing magic or I might be dreaming. Is everything real or an illusion? But the stomach is being filled and the hunger is appeasing. So, it is real. One won't feel appeased by dreams or magic.

Having ate to his full, he felt sleepy but thought of going back also. He looked behind and started. From where he had entered, a bed was lying there, and a white sheet was also spread on it. He sat down. On sitting he lay down and on lying down he fell off to sleep. Mardana had slept after eating well. He had a sound sleep but shortly he dreamt that two black cats with brown eyes were gazing at him. He was only thinking, that an arrow came and making a buzzing sound passed near his ear. He was startled and he woke up.

There was neither the courtyard, nor the veranda, nor the snakes, nor the lion cubs, nor the cats, nor any food, nor any serving girls. There was a big room, the walls of which were embedded with decorative glass and stones. The roof had some golden work done and carpets were laid on the floor. Bhai Mardana Ji was lying on a golden bed. There was fragrance all round in the room giving a very sweet aroma of musk.

He got up and sat down. He saw all round and said,

Ah! How people are so comfortable in this world. The Lord has made everything so comfortable. But Oh! What are the lights? I slept in the day only. Here the lamps are lit. It is night now. Oh ho! I have been tricked. I told the Guru that I shall be back in an hour or two and now it is night. What should I do? How will I find the way? O mind! Get up. Let's find our forest, Waheguru, Waheguru.

He got up from the bed and walked towards the door. Suddenly, one beautiful woman got up from the ground and sat in front with knees bent and said,

You give some order my Master.

Bhai Mardana Ji said,

Show me the way. I have to go.

Woman asked,

Where?

Bhai Mardana Ji replied,

I have to go to my forest.

Woman asked,

What for?

Bhai Mardana ji spoke, I have to go to my master.

Woman asked,

If he comes here, then?

Bhai Mardana Ji says,

Yes, he will come here, because I have been delayed. I am at fault but he is benevolent and has forgiveness. He will definitely come. Startled! Has he already come?

Woman said,

He has not come. He will come but not for taking you away. If he comes, he will stay here only. You do not go. In this darkness, you will stumble. Here, wild beasts roam up to the city walls. You stay here. Why do you want to leave the comforts of this place? If you are very keen, then you may go tomorrow. At least, for the night you rest here.

Bhai Mardana (looking towards everything) asked,

Who are you?

Woman replied,

I am a disciple. I was once a queen, but since I saw the comforts of this house, I have not moved out. You will also see such comforts that you never saw before.

The talk affected Bhai Mardana's mind. Starting from Talwandi and traveling on foot, the heat of the sun, the hunger, the torrential rains and discomforts day and night he remembered all that and his heart trembled. He had tears in his eyes. The mind said,

"Well after so many months of discomfort if one gets good sleep and eats well for a couple of days, then what is the harm"? I agree we are the Lord's servants and messengers of His name, but even a messenger would run carrying the post when his body is healthy and fit. If the body fails, then how would he carry the post? After a tiring time, rest is essential and is not against ethics. After two days and one night, a good sleep and eating to one's full is essential. Yes, I remember the Guru himself had said,

"When you don't eat food, you lose your temper".

Now, you see, I am happy and in joy. I am delighted. This must be because of Name. It is O.K. At least one night I can sleep well. Tomorrow, I shall go and meet.

Bhai Mardana ji (with eyes closed) asked,

Daughter, if I sleep here tonight, then I hope no discomfort will be there? When I came, there were lot of fearful things.

Woman replied,

No sir, you sleep comfortably and eat whatever you wish. This is a 'selfless service' and a rest house for the travellers. Whatever fear was there has gone. Be sure.

Bhai Mardana Ji again went into thoughts. When I left, the Guru had said,

"Remain in high spirits".

Why did he say so? I had come just for a meal. What was there to remain in high spirits? Well, did he know that I would go to a temple where it would be self-less service and I should remain in high spirits? Well, He is great. He may have just said it because it is foreign land and here people do magic and tantric practice. No. He must be in the knowledge of something. He can see through the past, present and future. He is an image of the Lord. No, no. O stupid fellow, the Guru's servant, He is the Lord. He knows everything. Now, what should I do? He must be waiting. O mind, I have no love for the Guru.

In this thinking, he went into a coma and was almost unconscious for a long time. When he regained consciousness he said,

"O what a blunder have I done? No, no, my love connection with him has cracked. Somebody, please come and help me. My love cord tied to the Guru has become loose".

He said to himself,

O singer, burn your stomach. You ate to your fill and then slept and the Guru sat hungry. O forgetful man, if you had any love for him then you would have carried the food and would have l1l1l1 to him and made the true Guru eat first. Then, you should have had the leftovers. Then, it was your love. But what should I do? If I had the love inside me, then only I could do something for the sake of love. This proves that you have no love for your beloved Guru. Now, what face shall I show to him? What excuse should I make and what should I tell what happened? Well, whatever has happened has happened. I will say, O I was dead 'Destined to die'. You gave the life spark and the Name spark. When you are inside my body, I am an ideal man. When you are out then I am 'Destined to die'. I am like earth. I have no strength and no power. You blow air in the ears of a dead person and he becomes alive. When you are close to them, they love you. When you get out of their mind the love-cord becomes loose. They understand that whatever love they have in their mind is your grace. What should I do? You are a redeemer of sinners. You be gracious and make me your own again.

When Mardana thought of grace then his eyes closed and tears fell from the eyes. That woman kept looking. When his eyes opened, she said,

I love you. Why did you cry?

Bhai Mardana Ji replied,

Nothing.

Bhai Mardana Ji (to self again)

O stupid 'good for nothing'. You did not realize Guru Nanak's godliness. You considered him just like a priest. Well, Guru Nanak and hunger, has hunger ever troubled him? Could he who is the Lord, ever be hungry? You have sinned in thinking that the Guru sat hungry and you did not take food for him. He is hungry only for singing the praises of the Lord. He has no other hunger. When he is above everyone, why did you think him hungry? When he is always satiated why did you think he was hungry? When he is a giver why you thought he was a taker? You are a stupid fellow. He is neither hungry nor ever in suffering. He is in ecstasy and elevation. But no, no doubt he has no desire but you have a desire. You are not a godly soul. You have a wish. You are human. You are absolutely at fault. It was for you to do service to him. You should have had the love in you. If you had love for him then food would not have gone down your throat. Not for the sake that my beloved was hungry but for the sake that you could not eat till you saw your beloved eating food. Now, you have become sensible. Have you realized at what stage you have become sensible? First you made a mistake, you made the 'love-cord loose. Then, instead of realizing the folly you said that the love-cord hasn't been loosened. He is always satiated. He has no hunger and sleep. He lives immersed in the Lord's love. Well, it is true and correct, but O stupid fellow, where has your love gone? He has no desires but since when have you become without desires. You are at his feet. How you dared to have food? How did your eyes close on this silly bed? O mind, don't deceive yourself. He is perfect but I am nothing without him. I am nothing and how should I love him but my clever mind steps in and says 'he has no need'. O mind, whoever trusts you he is drowned in both the worlds. O.K. Excuses making mind, now, at least get up.

Woman said,

Sir, you are crying. You don't speak out your mind. If you say something, it will be sorted out. Everything is here.

Bhai Mardana Ji spoke,

I made a mistake. I did not take food for my master. I ate food and slept.

Woman replied,

Oh! Is that all? Do you consider this house worthless? The moment you were offered food; the same moment food was sent to your master in the forest.

Bhai Mardana Ji looked at the woman's face again and again. Then, his mind blossomed and said,

Service should-be such that the mistakes of guests are taken care of. O, Great service, O, Great hospitality. O mind feel comfortable. Now, I shall cut a joke. I will put aside discipleship and like a singer have fun. I will say, o you always fix food for me. Today, I fixed and sent you such delicious food. He will laugh. I will say two more such things. It will be good fun. O Mardana, what have you said? You will cut a joke and you will say, I sent it. Fun is for a laugh or to hide a lie, then, with the master. O wretched mind, O 'Destined to die' you are a deceiver. Who should trust you? O.K I am nothing but I am a servant of the perfect. Well, that is the only support. I am whatever I am. How good are these people? What house of deceit can there be in

this city where such pious persons are living, that Guru Nanak has come to set right? See, they are giving me food and simultaneously sending to the Guru also. How much respect they are giving?

"Mardana, remain in high spirits".

Suddenly these words echoed in his ears as if somebody had said it just then. In bewilderment he thought and said,

How should I remain in high spirits? It means these people should not be able to influence me. I should say my Lord is giving me nourishment. In whose mind he sits that person serves me food. He only prompts, being the saviour. He gives nourishment to everyone. Yes, I should remain in remembrance and I should not go into forgetfulness and get trapped by anyone who himself is a beggar. But again, that will be thanklessness. If I do not thank the person who has done service to me then it will be thanklessness. How can I be in high spirits? "O Mardana you have a subtle art of music in you. You love beauty whether it is of a voice or of flowers and trees or the stars and moon or solitude or of architecture. Your mind being an artist is influenced by an art. Don't see beauty outwardly. See inwardly". Guru Nanak told me all this. That must have been meant for today.

Now, a beautiful woman emerged and placed a golden table in front of Bhai Mardana Ji. She spread a golden brocade tablecloth on it. Then, she brought a jewel embedded flask and a glass and kept it on the table. She said,

Sir, you are tired. Please drink this.

Bhai Mardana Ji asked,

What is this?

Woman replied,

This is grape juice from Kabul.

Bhai Mardana Ji asked,

Is it fresh or is it a distilled extract?

Woman replied,

It is non-distilled.

Bhai Mardana Ji asked,

Is it intoxicating?

Woman replied,

No, it is exhilarating.

'Drinking wine increases passions, says Nanak', the words echoed in Bhai Mardana Ji's ears and he thought,

O Mardana, is it a house of selfless service or a house of deceit? Is it service, love and devotion or is it intoxication of grape juice? Can 'service, love and devotion' and 'intoxication of grape

juice' go together? Save yourself O stupid. All your piousness is going into the ocean. But what has religion to do with eating and drinking? My beloved Guru said,

All eating and drinking is sacred when the Lord sends the nourishment.

This is eating and drinking and is sacred. A person hungry since birth gets a boon and acts snobbishly. Is it exhilaration? Is it intoxication? Well, maybe a very little intoxication. Exhilaration is in Name also. But in Name you get awaken-ness and in this you may get sleep. Oh no. Already it is late at night. Let me go. I don't want to be disregardful. He just got up and started walking.

Woman asked,

Sir, pious man, where are you going? You have travelled the whole world. Now you stay here and preach from here. You make disciples and send out far and wide. Yourself you relax here.

Bhai Mardana Ji said,

No, I want to go now.

Woman asked,

Does your mind say so?

Bhai Mardana Ji replied,

Well, my mind does not say so but I have to go.

Woman asked,

Is it good to vex your mind?

Bhai Mardana Ji uttered,

But here, seeing this wine my mind is in distress.

Woman said,

Oh no, it is not wine. It is fresh grape juice that the sadhus generally drink. You take dry grapes put them in water for a couple of hours, then, you squeeze it and drink. This is only relaxing. Tiflis does not give intoxication. It is not wine.

On listening this, Bhai Mardana Ji felt relaxed and sat down. Now, again his mind was in a dilemma, whether to go or rest here for the night? He looked at the comforts around and his mind succumbed to the temptation to stay. He lay down. His eyes closed. He felt an elevation in his mind, then he was lost for a few minutes, then he got up in craziness and his throat opened. Although it seemed night but in a sweet loving tune, he started singing a divine song that meant:

"Even if you are in palaces and surrounded by pearls and gems and fragrances of musk, saffron, agar and sandalwood, O mind, do not look at them otherwise you might go into the forgetfulness of the Lord's name".

The song was sung in such a sweet and soul awakening tune that the entire tempting influence of everything in the room became ineffective. Bhai Mardana Ji got up and walked in a bid to

go out. With the speed that he walked, his forehead struck against a wall and he became conscious. He said,

Oh no, where am I? It is dark. There is no way out.

Like a blind person he walked, groping in the dark all four sides of the wall. He counted the comers also but could not find any door. Now, what should he do or what should he not do? Helpless, he sat down and thought,

O Mardana, remain in high spirits. What was the meaning? What has happened to me today? Where is my high spirit? This merciless stomach has killed me. Every day you fill this well but again it is empty as before. So, I am well entrapped. I had delicious fried rice to my full. I had a good sleep on a luxurious bed. The fruit is this. Now, what else? Now, I should try to climb a wall. He was in this thinking only that a voice from a window said:

The walls are quite high. You won't be able to climb.

Bhai Mardana Ji asked,

How should I go out?

A Voice uttered,

Stupid is he who goes out from here. Has anybody who once came here ever gone out?

Bhai Mardana Ji asked (to himself),

O 'Destined to die' Guru Nanak is always true. He had warned me, "Don't go". Now, have you listened? "Has anybody gone out after coming here"? O my children, my house, my town, my lands all gone, I am grounded here. O Mardana, O my mind, children, Oh I remember my children but I do not remember the true Guru. The benevolent Guru must be worrying for you and you did not remember his love when in despair. You remembered the children. O my mind, you have not made me rise, I am where I was. I was so much in holy company and I sang so much of divine songs but when I was in extreme distress, I did not remember the true Guru in the first instance. In the first instance, I remembered the sentimental relationships only. O.K. You go as you wish and I will also remain in endeavour. At some time at least I will get rid of you.

Bhai Mardana now said loudly: Well O.K. If I have a powerful master, then he will take me out from here.

Saying this, he sat down and tried to meditate. But soon a tune of music could be heard. Mardana's music loving ears got attracted to the same. The tune was very sweet in Rag Malkosh. The prelude was so superb that it impressed Bhai Mardana Ji who was a lover of music and he said:

O wonderful! o wonderful!

On one side he was trying to meditate, on the other side his ears heard the superb music that started attracting him this side unknowingly. His uttering the words 'O wonderful' shows that he is being attracted unknowingly and he is getting absorbed in the beauty of the music, and helplessly, sometimes he says 'Well done', sometimes he says 'O wonderful' sometimes he says 'O God'. His head sways like a fir tree and his body shakes. The prelude that is being sung with

sitar is exhilarating and giving ecstasy. Sometimes it appears as if violin is also being played Simultaneously. This went on for a long time. Now, the tune changed. It was Raga Todi now.

It was so good that Bhai Mardana Ji's mind got engrossed in the music. It is man's nature to get attracted to beauty. If he is not able to see, then he imagines. When we listen to the music, then hurriedly we look towards the singer and the instrument. If one is not able to see, then, the eyes imagine. This attraction to beauty is man's nature. The mind keeps on imagining and giving it a name. Now, Bhai Mardana Ji's mind was totally engrossed in the music. He imagined figures but could not visualize a proper figure.

The women that he had seen in the morning, he could not figure out anyone from them properly. Meanwhile, a ray of light came from Bhai Mardana Ji's back and it fell in the front where a stool in the shape of peacock was placed. Behind this stool, statues of swans were kept. On the stool was sitting a young, extremely beautiful and charming singer woman in her thirties. Her eyes were so big, even bigger than the eyes of a deer. The eyes were throwing rays as if shooting arrows that gave some fear, some happiness.

Up till now, Bhai Mardana Ji was engrossed in the music. Now, he saw the beauty. His body trembled. Then his hands and feet started getting cold. Even at this time, he suddenly remembered that the Todas of Nilgiri had practiced Tantric or mesmerism and they shot the birds by staring at their eyes. The birds then cried and came and fell in their laps. Because of Rag Todi he remembered the Todas. He had a feeling,

'I am becoming semi-conscious'. Is it that I am being influenced by some evil eye?

But in a semi-conscious state he thought:

Music is the form of God. Music is divine. This ecstasy is divine. Now, the woman stopped singing and started staring at Mardana's eyes. Mardana even forgot to blink. Behind her was kept a mirror that was reflecting a strong light that was falling on Mardana's eyes. In this way, Mardana got fully influenced by the woman. He lost control of his mind and the mind went under the control of the woman. That is why, the Guru had told him to remain in high spirits. Also, He had said,

O Mardana, you have a subtle art of music in you. You are a lover of art. Your mind is influenced by an art. Don't see beauty outwardly. See inwardly. Don't get influenced or you may lose your mind. But it is the Lord's miracle.

Mardana got influenced. Why would Mardana be influenced when the Guru's hand is on his head? The miraculous Guru knows his miracles. So, Mardana got influenced. Initially, Mardana was influenced by the music. He became semi-conscious. His hands and feet became cold. His eyes stopped blinking. Then, they became like a stone figure. Now, he is fully influenced. He is sitting in semi-consciousness. He doesn't know anything. Now, the curtains that were making the room dark were removed and light came in. The woman got up from the stool, came near Mardana and asked,

Who are you?

Bhai Mardana Ji replied,

I do not know.

Woman asked,

Are you a singer?

Bhai Mardana Ji replied,

Yes, yes.

Woman asked,

Then sing.

Bhai Mardana Ji sang unconsciously.

Woman asked,

Are you a man?

Bhai Mardana Ji replied,

Yes.

Woman ordered,

No, say you are a woman.

Mardana:

Yes, I am a woman.

Woman asked,

Are you a ram?

Bhai Mardana Ji replied,

Yes, I am a ram.

Woman ordered,

Talk like a ram.

Bhai Mardana Ji made a voice like a ram.

Woman: Yes, well done. Sit and enjoy puffs of air.

Woman (looking towards the other ladies): He thought he was great He has strained my nerves.

At this time, the Sun was shining and strong sunrays were coming in the courtyard. The arrangements to show that it was night were dismantled. All the servants and maids were standing. Everybody bowed down and sang:

Noor Shah the great A great queen you are Great is your kingdom Great is your court the courage that Mardana showed in not being influenced by the woman, nobody else had ever shown. In the first instance, Noor Shah the beautiful woman who has influenced Mardana with her hypnotism, was enraged that who is this man who is not being influenced by us and we afraid that if this man goes away uninfluenced then we will be insulted in the presence of yours. Now, that you are successful in killing her prey, we praise you in your temple.

Poor Bhai Mardana Ji, he is semi-conscious only. He goes after the orders of the woman as iron is attracted towards the magnet. Whatever she says, he says and does. So much so that if she

gives chilies to eat and tells it is dried date, then he says, yes, it is very sweet. If she gives him a dried date to eat and tells this is sour, then he says, yes, it is sour and makes a gesture of throwing it out of the mouth. Noon declined.

"Mardana went to the city. He has not returned".

The ocean of goodness, Guru Nanak, sitting in the forest started worrying about his loving disciple and childhood companion Bhai Mardana Ji.

He knew that the Lord has sent him here to break a big temple of deceit and Mardana has been involved in the process. Let me go and enquire and do service to the Lord as well. So, the serene sea of tranquillity, the ocean of power, the true Guru got up and went towards the city. He kept walking where his feet took him and finally reached the temple and stood there. As chance would have it, the door through which Mardana had entered was open.

The true Guru glanced inside and saw one fat strong woman with very big eyes standing there. Behind her were tied two lion cubs with chains to two pillars. Two or three more women were standing around her. Mardana was sitting quietly. One woman was saying,

Mistress, be merciful. Now reduce the influence. He is yours now. He is not able to go anywhere. He will be at your service now and he will become your disciple. He sings well. Your prestige will be enhanced.

Noor Shah said,

No miss. He is not an ordinary fellow. He is some powerful person. He will be fully influenced only when he remains in this intoxicated state for three days and three nights.

Second woman said,

Mistress, seeing his handsome face, I pity him.

Noor Shah said,

You are showing pity to a crocodile. What pity are you showing? Have I hanged him? He is sitting in joy. Whatever I tell him, he says and does. Now, I have said, eat bread. He is moving his jaws to eat. When I say, you are a ram, then, he makes a voice like a ram.

On seeing this, everybody laughed. Now suddenly, Noor Shah's heart throbbed. There was no reason for that and her heart had never throbbed before. Today was the first day that her heart throbbed. In bewilderment she looked up. Her eyes had not even reached the door when there was a sweet and loud voice:

'Truth is the Lord'.

Now, she looked up. She saw a magnificent figure standing in the courtyard. She could not bear the dazzle from the Guru's forehead, and her eyes slid and closed. This also, was the first day that this hypnotist woman could not dare to look at somebody and her eyes closed helplessly. Now, she wished that she should go inside and her disciples should deal with the newly arrived visitor.

But her steps failed to comply with her wish. Then, again, she tried to open her eyes but again the eyelids slid and closed. Then, she picked up courage in her mind and stepped back, but she could take only one step back and that also with great difficulty. Her feet stopped moving. Now,

again she picked up courage and made a gesture to a maid. The maid went in and hurriedly brought one silver plate full of food and delicacies.

She came forward and offered the plate to the Guru. Another maid now ran and closed the outer door, which was inadvertently left open earlier. Seeing the food, the Guru made a gesture of 'no' with his hands and said,

It is not time as yet.

He was now standing like an immovable rock. His eyes were emitting radiance and his forehead emitted a bright dazzle. His lips were closed and his face showed a strong glow. His eyes were doing two things. One eye was blessing Bhai Mardana Ji and one was staring with power at Noor Shah. His face was giving radiance and an awe-inspiring appearance. In this temple, swiftness was the order of the day. Hardly the plate was refused that another tray came in which was kept a golden plate containing pearls and another containing gold coins.

On seeing this, the Guru made a gesture of 'no' with his hands, that it is not required. Hardly the Guru had refused gold that about eight to ten children wearing gaudy dresses came and fell at the Guru's feet and sang a song,

O a great saint has come. O a great saint has come. To make this temple sacred

It was a nice sweet tune and delicate voices, so attractive to make your heart melt, but the powerful Guru stood there without moving. He raised his hand that was carrying a garland of marble beads and his finger settled on a bead. The other hand, also he raised, probably pointing towards Bhai Mardana Ji or may be blessing the suffering humanity. Noor Shah was standing and looking but her vision slid.

She tried to move but she had no strength to move. By gestures she was asking the trained children to influence the Guru by different methods. Some time passed like this. Un-knowingly a few sadhus came and stood on the balcony and started gazing at the Guru but soon their eyebrows slid. The Guru said:

Waheguru, you are great.

Then, Bhai Mardana Ji held his ears and looked this way and that way and felt some restlessness. Meanwhile, all those who were staring at the Guru with an evil design, some lay flat on the ground, some rested against a wall and sat down. Noor Shah fell flat on the ground and started writhing and wriggling like a fish. Now, the Guru went forward and said:

Return the Lord's man. It is not good to make fool of saints.

Noor Shah looked towards Mardana and stared at him and said:

You can go. You are free from my influence.

Bhai Mardana Ji opened his eyes and saw it was afternoon. Unknowingly he got up and walked towards the gate. Then he saw, beloved Guru Nanak going out of the courtyard. He felt relieved to see the loving, cool, back of the Guru and he followed him. He was still enjoying the melodious music and imagining the face of the beautiful woman and the light reflected from the mirror but he did not remember anything else. Meanwhile, they reached the forest and the true Guru sat down. True Guru asked,

O Mardana, it is afternoon. You went to the city. Haven't you brought any food to eat?

Bhai Mardana Ji asked,

Has not the food reached you?

The temple people said,

We have already sent.

The true Guru listened and smiled.

True Guru asked,

O Mardana, what day is today?

Bhai Mardana Ji replied,

Your Holiness, today is your birthday.

True Guru asked,

You are my childhood companion. What have you done to celebrate?

Bhai Mardana (with eyes in tears of love and repentance) Ji replied,

Your Holiness, I am no good. One thing is, I do not realize your greatness. Secondly, I do not love you as the one and only one. Today, I have been analysing my mind.

True Guru said,

O Mardana, first we have to analyse our mind. We have to see to its shortcomings and faults. Then we have to fight with the mind. Then we are able to rein the mind. Then we become free from passions and desires. Then we get elevation of mind and the mind rises above sufferings, sentiments and grief and sees the Lord. If we do not see to its stealth and deception, then it keeps on deceiving us and making us suffer. Ideal man is he, who has known the stealth of his mind.

Bhai Mardana Ji replied,

But I am blind like earth.

True Guru spoke,

In our body, the animal instincts are supreme. They are controlling the mind and making us suffer. But we do not perceive that. You don't feel sad. You are an ideal man. One has to win over one's nature slowly. First, we have to become human from animal. Then we have to become a saint. It is fortunate that you have understood the stealth of your mind. Now, you will be able to rein it quickly. Don't try to rush.

Bhai Mardana Ji (with tears in his eyes) spoke,

My stomach is going to kill me.

True Guru said,

O Mardana, this stomach is like earth. This body is also like earth. But it is the body only, that is the arena and a wrestling is going on. We have to win over the mind and go into elevation. We have not to kill the instincts. We have to rein them and elevate them and make them

sublime. Our mind and body are like earth. We have to win over it. We have to win over it through holy company. You do two things:

1. Don't wash this earthly mind with earthly things. It has no effect. It has to be washed with the Lord's name. The mind has to be reined. Never forget the Lord's name. By remembering the Lord, you will get the strength of the Lord. That will make it easy to rein the mind. Remain at the Lord's feet in His remembrance.

2. Don't strain yourself in remembrance. Perform it in a relaxed way. Don't become impatient. Have confidence. Don't forget the Name in hunger, pain, needs or suffering. Have faith and patience. Don't get panicky. Even panic is a desire. The Lord Himself will help. At whose feet we have fallen, He gives the nourishment. He is the eradicator of suffering.

Now, you make sure that you do not become afraid under any circumstances. In fear, the remembrance goes. We are keeping the mind connected with the Lord by remembrance. That connection breaks. Then, the mind in its normal course is wandering and suffering only. Happiness is in remembrance only. O Mardana, this remembrance should not go. This connection of mind with the Lord should not break. You are fortunate. You have been blessed in searching your mind. Now, the Lord will bless you in reining your mind.

At this time, one Guru-disciple whose in-laws were living in this town came to have a glimpse of the Guru. He came and fell at the Guru's feet. The Guru blessed him and he sat down. Then, he said: Lucky is this town that you have put your sacred feet here. Now the temple of deceit will be broken.

Bhai Mardana Ji asked,

Dear Teekhan, what temple of deceit?

The Guru was in meditation at this time. So, both of them went and sat at a distance.

Teekhan replied,

Here is a woman magician's house. The entire town is afraid of her.

Bhai Mardana Ji insisted,

There is also a temple where they say it is selfless service.

Teekhan (laughingly) replied,

That only, is the temple of deceit.

Mardana started uttering,

Waheguru, Waheguru. That is why my body is paining. I am feeling a hangover.

Teekhan asked surprisingly,

Why? Has the Guru already blessed?

Bhai Mardana Ji said,

I have had a feast there.

Teekhan: I hope you have come back safe and sound.

Bhai Mardana Ji said,

No. I could not come away. The Guru came and has brought me back. But dear Teekhan, what is this magic?

Teekhan replied,

This is the seat of a Fakir. One woman is now on that seat. In her temple she has created a world. She has heaven and hell and lives like a queen. One does not really understand. She influences in such a way as the other person's mind goes under her spell. They do some other strange things also. She has different techniques to deceive people, like fear, bewilderment and greed. She gives threads, signets, amulets, etc. to fulfil the peoples' desires. But nobody knows her secret. I was also going and coming sometimes but I wanted peace of mind and that I could not get there. I was fortunate to meet the Guru at Dhaka and my wish was fulfilled.

Bhai Mardana Ji felt listless. He recollected the lion cubs and snakes, the feasting and hospitality, the temple and the musical tunes. Everything came to his mind, the hypnotic spell and unconscious-ness, his helplessness and distress. He trembled.

Teekhan asked,

Was she able to cast her evil spell on you?

Bhai Mardana Ji said,

I don't know much. I got absorbed in the music and became unconscious. I got consciousness only when the Guru came and brought me back.

Teekhan: You have not remembered. At Dhaka, one day, the Guru had said that in these towns people are in Shakti worship. The sadhus are in tantric practices. In the name of meditation people are suffering in tantric practices and supernatural powers. There is no piety or religion. People are in empty rituals and mistaken beliefs. Here Shakti worship and tantric practice and giving of signets and ash in the mistaken belief of fulfilment of desires, is prevalent. The Guru has given guidance and awakening to the people. The Guru has come here probably to break this temple of deceit. He is removing darkness all over. He will remove this darkness also.

When the Guru came out bringing Bhai Mardana Ji along with him, then Noor Shah was lying on the ground writhing and wriggling with pain. Her body was in pain and her head was aching and she was feeling restless. Her maids put her on a bed and carried her inside. Somebody was rubbing her body, somebody was waving a fan, somebody was sprinkling rose water and somebody was putting a spoon of syrup in her mouth. After sometime, everybody started slipping out one by one. Today, in this temple another interesting thing happened.

Sarad, who was a Buddhist monk, first got up. He felt as if he has come out of a slumber. He looked up and mumbled,

Oomph! Oomph! Where am I? I am a recluse. What am I doing in this temple? Oh! I am a disciple of a woman. I am writing magic, giving signets. I am collecting ashes from burials. I am giving false hopes to people. O my destiny, O my deeds, where am I?

Tuman Shah spoke,

O God! Was I in sleep or it was a hell of darkness? Me, a believer in God, a lover of my prophet, how I became a disciple of this wretched woman? I was a holy saint exercising abstinence. I worshipped this wretched woman. It is a curse to me. O wretched woman, the fire of hell should burn you. You made a fool of everyone. You made me an instrument of magic in your temple of deceit. O God! Forgive me. O Prophet! Save me.

Saina Nand spoke,

Oh Ram! How long did I sleep? Where was I and where am I now? What is this? Me a Pandit and a celibate, this is a woman, how I became her disciple? What did I do? Waheguru! Strange are your ways. The desires, how they kill you? How I got trapped? How to get out of here?

Goran spoke,

I completed a fast for forty days living on a few grams of almond oil. Then I slept. Somebody came and pressed my feet Then; I do not know what happened. Then, I ate meat. Oh! I am a Jain. Even water, we first strain and then drink. We never eat food cooked by somebody else. Even while breathing, we keep a net on the mouth and nose. I ate meat. It is true. Yes, it is true. O destiny! Hell, with you. You have made my mind filthy. Oh ho! What is this? Let me die. O earth! You open up so that I may jump in the gash. O fire! You flare up so that I may jump in you and burn myself. Oh ho! (Biting his hand), How did I get trapped here? I ate meat Again he bit his hand. O.K. I ate meat. Let me now pull off Noor Shah's meat. If I am a sinner let me be a sinner. Like a wild animal, with a beastly mind he got up and ran. The others also ran behind.

The rest of the maids and servants also ran with them. In the temple, where an hour earlier, under duress of Noor Shah, no one could even straighten his head, now everybody's eyes have opened so well that they are running to pull off her meat. All of them entered the room where she was lying down and wriggling. When they saw her wailing figure lying flat on the floor, everybody stopped. Uke a bucket of water thrown on a blaze they winced. Their hearts sank in fear and awe, seeing the eyes of the lioness like Noor Shah lying flat on the ground. One by one, their heads down, they went out. All of them are crying and wailing, putting their heads on their knees, someone in some corner and someone in some lane.

Noor Shah went to sleep but for a short time only. When she got up, her pride was a bit down and she felt weak. Saying Waheguru, she got up. She went and stood in front of a full-size mirror. She saw her own image and said:

“O ugly figure, skilled with intense training by my mentor, become strong like a lioness. See the entire house has become rebellious. You are lenient then you are gone. Set all these animals right and rein them. But, O mind, whom have you seen today? Who has put his feet in your temple? All your brain and courage is gone. Who has put the temple on fire without a spark, without thundering has taken the prey away, without fighting has made the temple desolate? Then, I do not like to abuse him. I have no courage to talk evil of him. He has put my body on fire, but I cannot dare to say that he was bad. He is a big magician. He has broken all my magic. O Noor Shah, you have come across a bigger magician. Should I come to grips with him or should I fall at his feet? Coming to grips, will be losing to him because my entire inner strength by which I had made these

Jains, Buddhists, fakirs, recluses, celibates, as my disciples is all gone. When I have no strength in my mind, how can I come to grips? Best is, to fall at his feet. By falling at his feet, I will get

something and I may get back my strength. Maybe my prestige is enhanced. That saint is godly and powerful and I influenced his disciple. He would not have been influenced, but I was clever and I noticed his love of music. So, I was able to catch him in his weakness. When his master is powerful, then of course he had to free his disciple. I made a mistake in influencing him. But Noor Shah, who knows, the fish catchers spread their net and catch the fish everyday but sometimes a crocodile is caught, then, no fish and no net. Same thing has happened with me. But that does not matter. One should not lose courage. Let me go and fall at the feet of the master magician and bring back my gone strength”.

The maids knew all the secrets. But some secrets she had kept to herself only. One was to lock the temple entirely. Noor Shah got up, closed all the doors with keys and then she herself came out through a hidden door. The true Guru Nanak is sitting in meditation in a squatting posture. His lotus eyes are closed like lotus. There is radiance and dazzle on his face. His forehead is shining with a heavenly light. His entire body appears to be immersed in the love of the Lord in ecstasy. All round is showering a loving grace, a wondrousness and ecstasy. At a little distance Bhai Mardana Ji and Bhai Teekhan are sitting. Their eyes are closed and they appear to be immersed in the love of the Lord.

The sun is moving towards the west. Its rays are coming, some through the tree leaves and some straight on the back. In the north, the clear blue sky is shining and giving a feeling of tranquillity. At this time, Noor Shah came. She brought a tray containing pearls, kept it in front of the Guru and bowed down. When she was about to sit, she felt a sickness and a burning sensation. In restlessness she moved back. She kept on moving back up to a distance of about twenty meters. Then she got some relief and sat down. Here, she sat down and looked towards the Guru but she could not bear the dazzle. Her magician eyes could not bear the godly glimpse and closed again and again, but her mind was in chaos and she kept sitting.

She said to her mind,

O great master magician. I did not know that there was anyone bigger than Noor Shah. Anyway, I will take his blessings by falling at his feet. I must take. Now, be merciful. Don't kill me. Your Holiness, I made a mistake in influencing your disciple. Now, I have come as a slave. Nobody kills those who come for refuge. Please stop. Don't kill me. When I am at your feet, then why kill?

In this way, thinking the saviour of the world as a master magician, she was accepting defeat, that the saviour Guru opened his eyes. A strong shower of godly grace fell over Noor Shah. She could not bear and she fell down. For a moment she was un-conscious, then she got up and felt coolness. She came forward step by step and coming near cried and said:

You are big. I swear you are big. You return my strength and my disciples. I take your refuge. You keep my honour.

A smile came on the benevolent Guru's face and disappeared.

Noor Shah said,

Lord of graciousness, O master magician, please have mercy on me.

At this time, Mardana and Teekhan were sitting with eyes open. They were looking at the dazzle on the true Guru's face. Yes, the dazzle that went into Mardana's eyes today never went away. Although, he had already seen that no power that came against the Guru was such as it was not

belittled, but the dazzle of this moment was with such a thrust that the Guru's graciousness, love and respect went deep into Mardana's heart. And don't ask about Teekhan. He was all sacrifice for the Guru in seeing him eradicating the suffering of humanity in this scene.

Beloved Guru spoke,

O Mardana, go and say 'Waheguru' loudly in her ear and Teekhan, you go and say in the second ear.

Both did the same.

Noor Shah uttered,

Oh! What is this dreadful sound? I am gone, gone. I am dead. Oh! Gone. (After a moment) I have woken up. Where was I sleeping? I was living in the love of the Lord when I was young. When did Noor Shah come? He loved me and said, she is intelligent. I learnt hypnotism. What was I? What did I become? What am I today? It appears, I was healthy in childhood, then some fever came, and I spent the entire life in that fever. Today, the fever is gone. How has it gone? Something is going out of my inside. What is it that has made me empty? It appears to be some fever. By this emptiness I have not become hollo. I am feeling cool. I am getting consciousness. Was this my body or a honeycomb of wasps where thousands of wasps were living? All have flown away. Oh! Why this poison I could not perceive as poison? I was also a picture of poison. How could poison perceive poison? Oh, Noor Shah get up.

Who should get up? By the grace of God, what coolness have you given? My entire blood has become cold. I had come to take strength. But whatever strength was left in me even that has gone. Oh! My prestige, my fame, my disciples, my magic, my supernatural powers, all is gone. O wonderful! Get up. Coolness, this coolness is very sweet. That was all a fever, a fever. o mind, see I am tranquil. I am fortunate. I have got an awakening. I should live in this awakening. There is a sensation in my body cells. My body cells have become a musical instrument. They are singing music. They are singing Waheguru, Waheguru, Waheguru. What is this Waheguru? This only has awakened me. o my mind you trapped people with music. Has this music 'Waheguru' awakened you? O mind, now you keep yourself in this comfort. Let the prestige and fame go to hell. I should lie down at the Guru's feet and listen to the music Waheguru, Waheguru, Waheguru, Waheguru.

Noor Shah is walking. She has a basket on her head. She has carried the basket up to somebody's house and earned two rupees as labour. She has purchased. Rice and lentil with this money. Then, entering her house through a secret door, she has cooked this rice and lentil. She said to her mind. Let me put this house on fire and go and live in the forest Then, she was afraid that she has not asked.

O mind, the benevolent Guru had not said that you do labour and earn, but I myself was scared of the dishonestly acquired money. Again, she trembled and felt sick, but she remembered Waheguru, Waheguru. Then, she picked up the cooked rice and lentil and took it to the forest and put it in front of the Guru.

"O gracious Guru, have food. I have brought food. This is not from my dishonestly acquired money. I did some labour and have honestly earned and have brought a little food". She prayed.

True Guru spoke,

Noor Shah, 'your honest earning', then, (smiling) well done. But O woman, today is my birthday and in your temple, people are suffering. How can I have food when so many people are in suffering? When their suffering goes, then only the food will go down the throat.

Noor Shah spoke,

O master of coolness, you are right. What a fool am I? Waheguru, Waheguru, Waheguru, with closed eyes "Waheguru, Waheguru, Waheguru".

Thus saying, Waheguru, Waheguru, she went like a dust storm and entered her temple. She went where all her disciples, some of whom were good saints, were sitting.

She said to them,

O stupid people, The Lord has come to earth in human form with a lamp of coolness and graciousness. You all get up. I, who had influenced you earlier, shall get you free. Come, your fever will go. Come and fall at the feet of the master of coolness. You will get priceless coolness. All of them got up and like puppets followed her.

Noor Shah came out with everybody and shouted in the market outside:

Anybody can loot my house. It is open. Noor Shah left all doors of the house wide open and left.

However, nobody dared to loot her house. News spread like wild fire, in the entire town that Noor Shah with all her disciples is going away somewhere. Noor Shah is walking. On her tongue is 'Waheguru'. In her body cells is 'Waheguru'. Her mind is tranquil. She is attracted towards the forest. She reached the forest and lay flat on the true Guru's feet. All her disciples fell at the Guru's feet.

Thus, spoke the True Guru to Sarad,

The light comes from the source of light, the sun. Piousness comes from the source of piousness, the Lord. What shall we do with piousness? At the time of need, piousness deceived. Without an oarsman the boat is wasted away. (Patting on his back) Imbibe a belief that 'Lord is there'. Be sure that all the time we have to be at his feet and with confidence, say 'Waheguru'. Coolness went into Sarad's mind. His mind became tranquil. The Name went down into his sub-conscious mind and he felt an elevation.

Then, Tuman Shah came and fell at the Guru's feet. Thus, spoke the True Guru to Tuman Shah,

Running after worldly desires, it is difficult to reach the Lord. It is like playing with snakes. Outwardly saying Waheguru, Waheguru and inwardly fuelling desires and passions in the name of the Lord. So, it is imperative that the desires will entrap. o son, rise above desires and passions. Take refuge in the Lord. Say 'Waheguru'.

Tuman Shah felt a sensation that he had never felt before. He saw his inner self. His mind deviated towards the Lord. He got elevation in his mind. He went into high spirits.

Then, the true Guru touched Saina Nand's head and said,

Devotion has to be in the mind. The mind has to be turned towards the Lord. The mind has to be reined. If the mind is let loose and it is not in the love of the Lord, then the praise from people is a snake in the form of ego and desires. It will bite. The snake of ego and desires can

bite when there is no guard. The Lord is the guard. Fall at His feet. Say Waheguru, Waheguru. The dirt of the praise from the people was washed from his mind and his mind became crystal.

He got into 'recitation of Name' and got elevation. Then, the Guru touched Goran's head and said,

By keeping fasts the body becomes weak. Laziness comes and desires increase. Neither the mind is reined nor the dirt of the mind goes. The desires dazzle. Have faith that Lord is on your head. Say 'Waheguru'. On saying Waheguru Goran got a sensation of the presence of the Lord in his mind and body and his mind got elevation.

In this way, the Guru blessed everybody one by one and gave the Lord's name. Everybody got happiness. Then, he said,

O Mardana, what is the day today?

Bhai Mardana Ji said,

O true Guru, it is your birthday today.

Now, the Sun was setting. It became evening. Bhai Teekhan brought water. The Guru washed his hands. Noor Shah served food to him. The Guru, the saviour, distributed food to everyone and he himself also ate. Then, Mardana sang a divine song in praise of the Lord.

After reforming Noor Shah, Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji proceeded towards Hajo. Here, was living an agricultural landlord, whose profession was to loot people in the daytime and commit burglaries at night. In this way, he used to make lot of money and he had kept thieves and killers as servants. This stupid person had a misconception that the influence of evil deeds is washed away by good deeds. So, he had made a kitchen in his house and he served free food to anyone and everyone at all times.

Anybody could come and have free food. Nobody was refused. The landlord, whose name was Bhoomia, had said to all the people of the town: Whosoever sadhu or fakir comes, send him to my house. Nobody should serve food to him. And if anybody disobeys me and serves food, then, I shall loot his house. His free kitchen was open all the time for everyone. This stupid fellow thought: This charity is fruitful and the evil that is being done is washed. Also, he thought: How the kitchen can be run if there is not enough money. If I am looting, it is for this free kitchen only. Guru Nanak heard that people are suffering from his profession. His heart melted and he thought:

I should allay the suffering of the simple people who are suffering on account of this stupid fellow.

To allay their suffering, he put his sacred feet on this land. When he reached the town and came to a house, then the owner of the house was delighted to see him. In his mind, he wished that he should be hospitable to him and serve him food. He thought: I have never met such an impressive saint before. But then, he felt afraid of Bhoomia and said:

You are welcome to my house. I shall be delighted also, but O handsome saint, I am afraid of the landlord of our town who is very rich and has opened a free kitchen in his house. His orders are:

Nobody should be hospitable to any sadhu or fakir or traveller. Whosoever comes, bring him to my house, and whosoever disobeys me, I shall loot his house. So, O image of the Lord, I shall take you there.

On saying this, accompanied by Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji, he walked and while walking, he looked towards the sky and with a sob, heaved a sigh and said:

Lord of the heavens, this Bhoomia has looted the wealth of the people but he has also looted our good deeds. When shall we do good deeds and how shall we take the treasure of good deeds with us? It might be better if he loots our house. At least he should not stop us from doing goodness. Then, he pondered: If he loots our wealth, then, how shall we do good deeds? Well, it is destiny. Endure, O mind, endure.

Meanwhile, they reached Bhoomia's house and the person left them there and came away.

When Bhoomia came to know that one very dignified saint has come, then, he himself came out to receive the guests and made them sit with respect in a nice room and was hospitable to them. He was delighted to have a glimpse. He said to his mind:

I have never met such an impressive saint before. He felt an attraction and sweetness but he could not understand why it was so?

Bhoomia first paid respect to Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji with words. Then, he washed his feet and said:

Please, O saint, food is ready, come and eat.

Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji said:

God bless you. First you tell, what is your profession?

Listening to this, his mind became dented. He thought:

If I tell him that I loot people and commit burglaries, then, it is not good. If I tell a lie, then, he seems to be intuitive. He will judge that it is a lie. If he has already heard from some enemy of mine that 'my profession is looting and burglary', he will put me to shame. How shall I tell a lie to him?

When he was in these thoughts, Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji was looking at his face with merciful eyes. With Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's merciful look his mind shook with vices. This double-mindedness churned his mind and like butter comes by churning yogurt, truth came out of his mouth,

"O benevolent saint, my profession is bad. My profession is not good. You have asked me to tell. I am afraid to speak the truth but the truth is that I loot people in the day and commit burglaries at night. But one thing is there. I use the money for doing goodness. I am maintaining a free kitchen. Anybody who comes, sadhus and fakirs all come and go satiated from here. I do service to them. All the sadhus go happy and say, you are the most pious man. So, I loot those who have money and distribute to the needy and poor".

Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji smiled and said:

God bless you. You have spoken the truth.

Bhoomia:

Up till now, nobody dared to ask me like that nor I have accepted my evil with my own lips. But O saint, I don't know what magic you have in your eyes, that today is the first day that I trembled and said all that I have been doing. You come and have food now.

True Guru:

When you yourself say, your profession is not good then your food is not fit for saints.

Bhoomia:

When I am spending all for a good cause even then it is not good?

The true Guru:

Whom you kill, they cry. They suffer. How can good fruit result from bad seeds? If you sow good seeds, only then, you get good fruits.

Bhoomia was in a dilemma. Thinking of his vices he trembled. He could see the suffering, the injured, the looted cursing him. He could see an ocean of suffering people. Again, he trembled. Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's merciful eyes were looking at his face and he was seeing the vast ocean of crying and suffering innocent people cursing him. After some time, this scene went away from his mind. Then, he looked down towards Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's feet and said:

You have said right but now, you have food. I should be happy today at least Many saints had food here. Their blessings also, I shall get Please have food.

True Guru:

O gentleman, you leave this profession. Only then, you can have happiness. The wealth laced with blood cannot become a sacred wealth. The fruit of the sufferings that you have given, you have to bear, not those who had food here. See, if the king catches you then you will go to prison, not those who had food here. Similarly, when you go to the Lord's court where the bad deeds are weighed, you will be punished. See your inner self. Your vices have made your mind hard. You don't feel merciful for those whom you give suffering. You are not afraid of the Lord that you are making His children suffer. You had some goodness in you. That has prompted you to tell the truth. Since you have told the truth you can be blessed but only if for the future you leave this profession and earn in an honest way. When you earn in an honest way and give in charity, then, that will bring you fruits.

Bhoomia started thinking and mumbled, Oon Oon Then, he rubbed his forehead with his hand and said:

Your magical eyes have killed me. I have lost the guts to tell a lie. I cannot put you off. You are a godly soul that lies don't come near you. Whatever little truth I had is coming out You be gracious and forgive my past but whether you bless me or curse me, I must tell you the truth again, that I will not be able to leave this profession. It is in my blood. My dad did it, my grandfather did it, and it has become my nature. The only thing is that I am spending on a good cause. No, No. I will not be able to leave it but as a handsome saint, you are too good. You must have food even if you feel bad afterwards. I get wheat and vegetables from my own land also. I shall get food cooked from what comes from my own land. Whatever be, you have food and bless me.

Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji now, looked towards Bhai Mardana Ji. He played the Rabab and sang:

The Lord is truth. The Holy Name is the true Guru. In your mind and heart, he gives to you Recite the Lord's name that is true.

Bhoomia listened to the divine song. It went into his mind that truth is something precious. He has spoken the truth and saw that the benevolent Guru has not appreciated his 'doing goodness', but has appreciated his speaking the truth. Then, he said:

It seems you appreciate truth only. I thought you will be angry on my telling the truth but you did not appreciate my 'doing goodness' and you have appreciated my small truth. That is why, I thought out and I told you the truth that I will not be able to leave this profession. You love truth. What lies should I tell you? It seems at your door there is no place for lies.

The true Guru was a clever doctor. He understood that what Bhoomia had said was absolutely true. Profession of the ancestors and habit of years cannot be changed overnight. He thought:

This heart that has become like a stone will melt slowly only. I should put him on such a path that this profession that is not good leaves him by and by. Then, Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji said:

O Bhoomia, The Lord is there and is always living. Everybody has to die, but there is life after death. The soul does not die. It has to remain living in any form. The Lord is the Truth. When you meet the Lord, then only the dirt of the deeds can be washed away. One thing is speaking the truth and one thing is living with Truth i.e. The Lord i.e. living in the presence of the Lord i.e. living in the remembrance of the Lord. 'when you live in the presence of the Lord, then you get salvation while living. The remembrance of the Lord is reciting His name. The Lord is formless but He reveals Himself in His name. One has to recite His name. As you plough fields and sow the seeds, similarly this body has to be ploughed with good deeds and the Lord's name has to be sown. When this seed grows the body becomes a sacred temple. And you live in a sacred temple. This Name washes the dirt of the bad deeds. But the condition is that you have to tie this Name to your mind with a knot. You have not to go into forgetfulness. This Name will give you eternal happiness. You will be blessed if you keep the Name tied.

Bhoomia:

Yes, Truth, Truth. I should always speak the truth.

Secondly, if somebody tells the truth and I don't like it, then, I should not be angry because the person has spoken the truth. Thirdly, Lord is the Truth. I should love Him because He is the Truth. How the Lord is Truth Isn't He Truth?

Bhoomia:

Yes, now I understand. Lord is Truth. He is always living. What is always living is Truth. Falsehood is not always living. We speak as if it is true. It is truth only till such time that the other person thinks it is true. So, it lives only till the other person thinks it is true. When the other person comes to know that it was false, then that truth dies. But it was not truth at all. It was falsehood. The falsehood died. So, falsehood dies.

Yes, truth is that which always lives and Lord is always living. So, Lord is truth. Then, you said His name is Truth. How? Let me think. Lord is Truth His name is also Truth. Lord is

always living. His name is always living. I will die. My name will also die. I am perishable. My name is also perishable. So, the Lord is Truth. His name is also Truth. Yes, I'll understand now. Like, the Sun is radiance its rays are also radiance. The Lord is Still. The Name is sunrays. This is O.K. Now, you said we have to plough the body with good deeds, charity and mercy. I am doing good deeds and charity but mercy I had not known.

Now, I have to learn mercy. Without mercy the good deeds and charity is worthless. Then, I have not understood what is the sacred temple and living in it. O.K. I should at least do-good deeds and charity what I am already doing and recite the Lord's name and live in the presence of the Lord. I already know the Lord is there, but I never remembered Him. O.K. Now you tell me in nutshell.

True Guru:

First thing is, speak the truth and recite the Lord's name. Second is, be merciful to poor people, and not make them suffer. Third is, don't do evil to anyone whose salt you have eaten. If you do these three things then your vices will go. You will become pious and your bad deeds will be washed. You will be blessed. Bhoomia: You have told me to do three things.

1. Speak the truth.
2. Be merciful to poor people.
3. Not to do evil to anyone whose salt you have eaten.

Now, the first truth is that I cannot leave this profession. Although, I will try my best but I don't trust myself. But I will speak the truth. The second Truth is the Lord. So, the truth you have said, I accept from now only. One is speaking the truth and one is reciting the Name. I have already seen the fruit of truth. You have appreciated my speaking the truth. That is why you are so gracious. 2. Not to do evil. 3. Mercy on poor people. Not to make the poor people suffer. These two things, I shall also remember. Like, when there is a strong wind the dirty smells go away, when it rains the ponds and lakes become fresh, when there is a flash the darkness goes away.

Similarly, Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji after giving such a jerk to Bhoomia went away. Bhoomia now tried to leave this profession. For a couple of days, he sat in peace. But again, the addiction came. He recited the Lord's name but Name was a newly planted seed that had just started growing and the old habits were rooted ocean deep. But one difference could be perceived. Previously, he used to boast on his victory. Now, he said:

What did I gain by looting somebody? That is why, the true Guru asked me to leave this profession. In this uncertainty of mind, he thought: Oh! I had promised Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji that I would not let poor people suffer. What I am doing is not mercy. When this thought became too strong then he said to his mind,

O Mind, leave this looting. There is no mercy in it. I make people suffer. But O mind, how will this free kitchen run and how to pay to the servants? Yes, idea. Let's go to the king's palace. The king doesn't have his own earned money. He is not going to become a pauper, and there is no suffering for the people. O.K. That's fine. Burglar the king's palace. Lot of money will come in one go and it will suffice for a long time.

In this thinking, the next day he dressed himself as a rich man and as if a prince he went to the king's palace around midnight, fearlessly. When he was entering the gate, the guard asked,

Sir, who are you that you are going in without permission?

Bhoomia was in a fix whether he should tell a lie or the truth. The mind said:

I have made a promise to speak the truth.

Then, with confidence he said:

I am a thief.

The guard was afraid:

He seems to be some near relative or friend of the king and seems to have got annoyed on my asking. I should not make him angry lest he goes and tells the king that 'I have been insulted by the guard' and I may get punishment. I am a new guard.

So, he said:

You can go. I am sorry, sir.

Bhoomia went inside. He knew the roads inside. Being a big landlord, he had visited the palace a number of times, and was known to the king. He already had clues of all secret places in the palace. He could easily find where the jewellery was kept. When, after packing up the jewellery of the queen, he was about to leave, he saw one golden plate lying on the side. When he picked up the golden plate. Then, he saw something in it and his hands touched a powdery thing. Out of curiosity when he tasted it, he found it was a digestive powder. But unfortunately, there was salt in it. And Bhoomia ate the salt of the king.

Bhoomia now remembered the promise to Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji that he won't do evil to anybody after eating his salt. He thought: I have eaten the salt of the king. How can I do evil to him? Then, his mind said:

Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji meant that you do not do evil to your friends and relatives because you eat and drink with them. It can also be when you are in somebody's employment, then, you get salary from him and you eat his salt. It can also be that somebody gives you some money and you eat from his money. I should not do evil to him. I am neither anybody's servant nor there are relatives and friends nor it is somebody's given money, so, it is O.K.

Again, he thought:

But the promise was not to do evil after eating somebody's salt. Salt I have eaten, in whatever way but I have eaten. I must keep up my promise. If what I thought initially was not a correct thinking, then he won't bless me. And my mind can be washed of the sins only when he blesses me. Again, I have to reach the Lord's palace by his grace. By his grace only I can get salvation. So, I have to obey his orders to get his grace. His order was not to do evil to anyone after eating his salt. And I have promised that I shall abide by his orders. So, I must keep up my promise. But then, how will I manage the house expenses? I shall rob some other king. O mind let me go. In these thoughts, he left all the packed wealth and went away and slipped out cleverly.

Next morning, the king saw that all the jewellery and diamonds are lying packed. When it was opened, everything was intact. But it was evident that some thief had come and he was about to take away everything but for some reason he left behind everything. It was astonishing why he had left behind everything, but also the king was enraged as to how a thief entered the palace

and entered the secret chamber. So, the first enquiry was from the guards. From the guards, it became known that one person in the guise of a prince did come and he spoke

'I am a thief'.

The new guard allowed him in the thinking that he might be a relative or close friend of your majesty. Now, the king became more eager to catch the thief who was so bold. So, the orders came and the police started interrogations. These people have no mercy. They consider everybody as bad. So, many people were arrested in suspicion, but no positive clue could be found for some days. Then, the police resorted to beating up people who were arrested on suspicion. Bhoomia came to know that the innocents are being treated mercilessly for my doing. The rich are bribing money and getting away but the poor are being thrashed. His mind said:

I had promised to Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji that I would not make poor people suffer. But now the poor are suffering on my account. Although I am not giving them suffering, but it is on my account. I have done something and the poor are suffering. o mind come now, whether death sentence or prison, bear whatever comes, but free the poor people from suffering and don't miss the blessings of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji. In the end I have to go to the Lord's court.

In this thinking, Bhoomia dressed himself like a rich man and went to the king's durbar and waited for a chance to meet the king. When the king came out of the durbar, then, swiftly he went and stood in front of the king. With folded hands he prayed:

O King, I am your thief. I had stolen your jewellery but then I left it there only. Your men are thrashing poor people. You make them free. I am the culprit. You can give me whatever punishment you think fit.

The king and the courtiers were amazed. They had never witnessed a thief who would boldly steal and then leave everything behind, and then, after being a thief, is so merciful that he cannot see the suffering of the poor people. Is he a pious man or a thief? Then, the king asked:

Why did you leave everything back after stealing? Did somebody get up or you had some misgiving?

Bhoomia:

Your Majesty, the truth is that nobody could catch me and I was not afraid also, but I have found a Guru who has come from the Lord. He gave me three commands. One was not to do evil after eating somebody's salt. When I picked up your jewellery and was about to leave, then, somehow, I tasted the digestive powder lying there. So, O King I ate your salt. Then, how could I do evil? So, I left everything there only.

The king was amazed. His mind said:

What a strange thing? He is a thief and a sinful man. But he is so obedient to Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji that he follows Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's words so strictly. Is he a sinful man or a pious man?

Then, the king said:

O fearless man, are you not afraid that I will give you punishment? You are telling the truth without being caught by anyone.

Bhoomia:

Your Majesty, I have made a promise to my Guru that I won't tell a lie. Come what may. I will love the Truth i.e. the Lord and remember the Lord.

King: But you have not been caught. What is the reason that you have come on your own to get punishment?

Bhoomia: I have made a promise to Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji that I won't make people suffer. Now, your men are beating up the poor people for something that I am responsible for. That is why I have come. I thought I have committed a crime and the poor are being punished. If Bhoomia steals then Bhoomia should get punishment.

The king was again amazed and said,

O, you are Bhoomia. You are our big landlord. You are known for your charity. You are doing service to sadhus. I always thought you are a very religious person.

Bhoomia:

Yes, O king, even I considered myself as a religious person. Whatever money I got from looting, I was spending on the saints and sadhus in charity. I thought I was a pious man because I was giving in charity. But O king, one day came a saint, not saint, a godly soul, an image of the Lord, he opened my eyes. He said: I cannot have food at your house. Your food is from sinful acts. I told him: I am giving all in charity. He said me, your earning is sinful and full of the suffering of the people. I agreed but I told him: This has become my nature and I cannot change myself. Then, he said me, if you wish to be blessed then you make three promises that I have told you. He said: If you wish to be blessed, then keep up these promises religiously. When he left, then I decided I must keep up all three promises that I have made to him. Now, when I went for a burglary, sometimes I felt sad to see the suffering of the people whom I looted. Previously, I was never feeling sad on seeing the suffering.

Like, the hunters do not feel sad on seeing the writhing of animals and birds. Similarly, I considered it a bravery not to bother about the suffering of those who were looted. But now, I have some mercy, after Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's discourse. He had also asked me to leave this profession but I was not able to leave. Then, I decided I should not loot the poor people. I should target the rich only, but it was not easy to know who is rich and who is poor. Then, I realized that the poor are 'Suffering. So, I decided to target a king, so that I could get a good amount of wealth and then I could relax for one or two years and there would be no suffering for the poor people. In this thinking, I targeted your palace. Now, again for the sake that poor people should not suffer, I am standing in front of you.

Second thing, was not to do evil after eating somebody's salt. That is why I left your wealth. This also stopped me from doing evil to friends and relatives with whom I had food at any time. Third thing, was telling the truth. That is why I have come and am telling the truth. Now it is up to you, whatever punishment you will give, I am ready to undergo.

The king was again astonished. He said to his mind:

Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji is an ocean of wisdom. How he has made him shun his evil deeds? Addiction is bad. Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji has encircled him in such a way that automatically his addiction to burglary and looting will go. Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji is

not just an ocean of wisdom. He has splendour. He is powerful. His discourse has so much influence on the minds of thieves and dacoits. One should have a glimpse of such a Guru.

Then, the king smiled and said:

Where is your Guru?

Bhoomia:

He has gone on his travels. I do not know where.

King:

What is his name?

Bhoomia:

I could not ask his name. But later, people told me that he was Guru Nanak, who had come from Lahore (Punjab state).

King:

Really? He is the same who has broken the house of deceit of Noor Shah.

Minister:

Yes, Your Excellency. He is the same Guru Nanak. I have heard he passed from here.

King (in his mind):

It is so unfortunate. I could not have a glimpse of the godly soul.

King to Bhoomia:

Listen Bhoomia, you have accepted your sins yourself. The punishment is imprisonment. But by putting you in prison, you will meet more sinful people. I am afraid, in their company you may not again get into burglary. If I make you free, then, justice is not done. But the real justice is to reform the sinful. I feel the king from the heavens has given you punishment and reformed you also. You were known as a pious man. Today, you have become known as a sinful man. Fame is Life. Infamy is death.

Rest, he has put you on such a path that you will soon be reformed or maybe you are already reformed. You cannot burgle, you cannot loot because innocent people will always be caught and they will suffer. You cannot burgle rich people because now you will be interrogated in the first instance. You won't tell a lie and you will be caught automatically. So, for you, burglary and looting is quite difficult. The true doctor has given you such a medicine that you will be cured of your vices automatically.

And you will become a saint. But I give you credit that you have kept up your promises even when you had to put yourself in jeopardy. So, when I see you are going towards piety and you have the courage, strength, conviction, sense of honour and guts, you will be so much reformed that saints will come to have your glimpse. So, I pardon you and make you free. But I will keep a watch on you that you are treading on Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's path and not making people suffer.

Time passed by. Bhoomia really became a saint. All his vices were gone. Goodness prevailed in him. The Lord's name settled in his mind and body and that washed all his sins. The Name washed the dirt of vices and bad deeds on his mind and his mind became crystal. The Lord's name gave him ecstasy.

When the Lord's name settled in his mind, The Lord's goodness came in his mind. He became pious. When the king heard all this about Bhoomia, then he got faith that Bhoomia has become a real saint. Then, he called Bhoomia and said:

I make you my mentor. You initiate me as your disciple.

Then, Bhoomia said:

O King, I am myself not a disciple as yet. He is the Guru who blessed me and transformed me from a sinful man to a saintly man. O King, the Lord's name is a grace from Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji. I have realized only now. You better make Guru Nanak as your mentor.

Then, the king said:

Where is he?

Bhoomia:

He has gone far. But he has intuitiveness in him. He listens to the voice of love and reaches where love is. You construct a Gurdwara where the Lord's praises should be sung. You also come and listen to the Lord's praises there. Singing should be of the divine songs that my men sing at my place. When Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji went away, I sent my men to Noor Shah from whom they have brought some divine songs. We sing those. O king, if you have faith, then, you do this. There is no all-time free kitchen in my house. Whatever earning I have from my lands; I eat and share.

Then, the king constructed a Gurdwara and made provision for free food to the congregation in the name of Guru Nanak. Whosoever, the needy, the poor and the sadhus came, had food there. The divine songs were sung early in the morning. Bhoomia's associates, who had become disciples of Guru Nanak, were singing the divine songs there. People from far and near started coming to the Gurdwara. The king himself used to come. Many people started coming. The king was so much impressed by Bhoomia that he made him a minister in his cabinet. He thought:

Such an honest person with so much enthusiasm in him will be a very responsible minister.

The king himself was in prayers that Guru Nanak may give a glimpse and bless. Bhoomia who was a sinful man, became a pious, Lord-fearing and Lord- loving man, as a Banyan tree becoming a Sandalwood tree.

From Hajo, Guruji proceeded through Matsyadhvaj, Tinsukia and reached Dibrugarh which marks the end of Guruji's visit to this state. In the state of Assam, there persists a Gurdwara at Dibrugarh entitled Gurdwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha with the memorable encounter of the fury of the mighty river Brahmaputra erosions/flood (after the great earthquake of 1950) which stopped at the Gurdwara Point after offering of Prayers and the continuous recitation of Bani from Satguru Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Maharaj. This tradition and belief I being carried every year on 15th of August with offering of prayers and dipping of Parsad and Langar in the mighty river of Brahmaputra as a mark of respect.

Investigating the historical records of Assam, it can be scrutinised that there are not plentiful places associated with the visit of Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Maharaj as there are countable number of 17 places related to Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj. In the all-inclusive jurisdiction of the Assam State, only Dhubri and Kamakhya are the two places associated with the visit of Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Maharaj.

Legend prevails that while Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Maharaj was in Bihar, He was invited by Raja Ram Singh and Five Sufi Saints from Malda, West Bengal namely – Shah Akbar, Shah Bagmar, Shah Sharan, Shah Safi and Shah Karan to Assam for the purpose of reconquering the Mughal Forces who were once defeated in Guwahati. The details of Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Maharaj's travel to the state of Bihar have been mentioned in my written book – The Sikh History of Bihar. Raja Ram Singh invited Guruji

Guruji accepted their invitation and osculated the soil of Assam around the year 1699 in the month of February enrouting the banks of Brahmaputra River. Guruji accompanied by Raja Ram Singh and five Sufi saints reached Dhubri and it was the first place in the state of Assam marking Guruji's arrival. Reaching the zone, Guruji firstly bowed at the Manji memorializing Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's visit and sat on the banks of Brahmaputra River. The caretaker of this Manji was an Udasi entitled Mahant Jivan Das.

For the war that was to be commenced, several magicians, witchcrafts and other Tantra Scholars were invited. The chief woman magician named Netai Dhobani pitched her camp just opposite to that of Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji. Disjunct only by the river, the woman magician based with her stuffs and began reciting the mantras of destruction. At first, she raised fire and storm to which Guruji remained undisturbed. The munificent Master uttered,

“Keep thinking of God and no harm will come to you. The demonic powers dare not come near men armed with the wisdom and light of God”.

The five Pirs prayed side by side with the disciples of Guru Tegh Bahadur. Secondly, they hurled a 26 feet long stone, the four sides of whose girt measured 36 inches' x 28 inches' x 28 inches' x 33 inches. The stone came swinging across the sky and struck the ground near Guruji's camp so hard, that nearly half of it went into the ground, and the other half, about 13 feet, remained above the ground at an angle of around 50 degrees. Even today, it can be eyed in the identical position the way it was struck. During the British Raj, some British officials tried to destroy it, but out of the blue, everyone observed blood brimming out of it. It has therefore been left unmolested under official instructions till date.

Thirdly flung a tree the magic woman Netai Dhobani which fell very close to Guruji's camp. None of the person present were injured. The roots of the tree are still lying outside the ground. Finally, Guruji took a bow and thus goes an arrow which hits at the altar of magic. Lo and Behold! All the Tantric goings-on split ends.

They were completely depressed of their strength, and will-power. The chief magician when got to know of the instances emanated to the Benevolent Master, and begged forgiveness for having offended him. She begged Guruji not to destroy the monuments of her miracles; the stone and the tree.

Thus, replied the Master –

“Give up your Tantric exploits of wasting vital energy in destructive forces. I assure you that I will try to bring about peace between Raja Ram Singh and the Ahom King, for which a change of heart is necessary on both sides. I also assure that none of my Sikhs would ever destroy the monuments of your miracle”.

Guruji advised Raja Ram Singh to try to achieve his end through negotiation, and peace, and not to fight unless he were provoked to do it. The Ahom chief was the first to send a conciliatory message, though he did so only to postpone an immediate encounter for which he was not fully prepared. Pressed by Guru Tegh Bahadur, Raja Ram Singh asked the Ahoms to honour the treaty which they had signed with Allah Yaar Khan and to evacuate Guwahati. Thereafter he would not harm them, nor wrest any more of their territory.

The Ahom General refusing to hand over Guwahati uttered:

"War is not the only method of settling the issue. We have four avenues mentioned in the scriptures: conciliation, gifts, dissension and open rupture."

Guruji henceforth travelled to Bihar and had brought about fifty Sikhs with him most of whom were well trained warriors. The details of Guruji's travels in Bihar is mentioned in my book "The Sikh History of Bihar". On reaching back in Dhubri, Guruji did not permit to fight anyone on either of the sides. He stood for peace, and settlement through negotiations. To prevent bloodshed Raja Ram Singh challenged the Ahom King named Chakradhwaj Singh, to fight a duel in the presence of the two hostile armies but was denied.

Subsequent to this, Ram Singh was preparing for war but acknowledged a very depressing news that made him to reflect seriously over the policy and character of his treacherously cruel master, Aurangzeb. When he left Delhi, the Emperor had kept his son, Krishan Singh, as hostage at his court. He now received a letter from his widowed mother saying:

"Aurangzeb has forced the death of Krishan Singh by making him tussle with tigers. Such is his friendship for us. We have obtained sufficient fame and religious merit by subjugating other countries, and making them accept the domination of Aurangzeb. Never think that the subjugation of the eastern kingdom (Assam) will add to our longevity and prosperity."

The reverses which the Ahom King had suffered had toned down their zeal for further warfare. The letter from his mother had damped the enthusiasm of Raja Ram Singh also. At this opportune time, Guruji was equally respected by the Mughal Generals and the Ahom Kings. He sent his envoy to negotiate peace on honourable terms. Guruji was known to be a prophet who was independent minded. A negotiated settlement was reached in which Raja Ram Singh no longer pressed his demand for Guwahati.

Guruji was asked to mark the new boundary line between the two forces. Both the Mughals and the Assamese agreed to coexist without interfering in each other's territory. The happy occasion of the peace settlement was celebrated by a joint homage to Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji, by both the Mughal and the Ahom armies. The Mound of Peace at Dhubri was erected in the form of a permanent monument to Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji's successful peace efforts stands at Dhubri to this day. It was by the efforts of the Hindu and Muslim soldiers of the Mughal and Assamese armies from Rangmatti and other adjoining areas.

Then Guruji was appealed by the Ahom King to pay a visit to the Kamakhya Temple. The confirmation of Guruji's Holy visit to this temple is still reminiscent with a priest of this temple. I inquired in the Kamakhya Temple regarding the visit of Satguru Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji as Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's visit to this temple is evidently persisting through various Sikh sources and Historical records. Suddenly, one of the priests insisted me of the Sikh Panda. My ears could not accept as this word Sikh Panda. Probing more about this strange identity, I was linked to him by other priests and thus our conversation commenced. I asked,

“Are you the one who is termed as Sikh Panda”?

A priest with long beards and moustaches with beads in his hands retorted,

“Yes, I am the Sikh Panda. My ancestors were from Punjab. First it was Guru Nanak who visited here and my ancestors turned His followers. Subsequently, it was Guru Tegh Bahadur who was accompanied by the Ahom Raja and one of His Sikh”.

My curiosity grew intense and I probed,

“Do you have any evidence of Navi Patshah's visit to this temple”?

He replied,

“The Sikh who accompanied Guru Tegh Bahadur here was inscribing a record. My ancestors were greatly devoted to Sikh Gurus. Pleased with devotion, Guru Tegh Bahadur gifted the handwritten record by putting His own signature to my ancestors. It is in my possession at present. Unfortunately, years ago, the Kamakhya Temple caught fire. For the high blazes that emerged, our houses were burnt as we do find our abode in the temple premises. Even the record of Guru Tegh Bahadur caught fire and only a folio is remaining”.

I inquired with intense grief,

“May I please have a glance of that Folio”?

He retorted,

“Abinash Ji, you are most welcome”.

I took few photographs of that folio and thus it follows,

"Now I narrate the chronicle of the magnificent life of the true Guru: People in the distant East were yearning and earnestly waiting for the influx of the true Guru. Realizing their great devoutness, the Guru came to the east to accomplish their longings. It is this journal of His visit to the distant terrestrial of Assam and henceforth, I refer to this account.

Mysterious are the methods of the compassionate Guru; it is incredible to describe his delightful autobiography. Though He is the True Lord in mortal coils yet He has no possession of a minor connexion. With a tranquil resolution and a sun-like splendour, his heart ever resting in Sunya, the stillness of self-realisation. On having a slightest glance of Him, the strength of His enemy and opponents gets futile. Pure like the holy Ganges, he lives in the joy of divine contemplation.

From outside he appears to be a King indulging in all the luxury and joy of princely life.

At heart he is detached, exalted in spirit, firm in his concentration of mind like, the Yogis. He performs all the worldly duties like a worldly man. Within his heart his mind remains poised on thoughts of God. The seekers of Truth, who were eager to meet the Prophet of Light, now had their desires fulfilled.

He travelled into the most difficult regions, suffered the hardship of strenuous journey in far flung regions of the East, just to meet the humble and patient seekers of Truth.

Somehow or the other he reached these far-flung regions. and fulfilled the eternal promise of God, proclaiming that the prophet will knock at the door of every seeker of truth. Everywhere devotees sing his praises.

Whoever dredge up the merciful Enlightener, Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji, finds that He is there with Him, ever present. The Sangat of the East were craving for a sight of the True Guru. Now Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji has crossed mountains, rivers, and undergone great physical strain to reach his devotees of the East and bless them. In every region of the East, every home, every seeker of truth was devoutly making preparations at home, in the hope that the Guru would divine their secret wish to meet Him, and come to them. Day and night people prayed in every region of the East that Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji might come to their homes and bless them."

The Sikh Panda continued to utter that according to the Historical Records, Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji returned to Dhubri and bid goodbye to Raja Ram Singh. He bestowed gifts to all the Rajput and Mughal warriors with the Siropa and rare swords. One of these has fortunately been preserved in the Baroda Museum. A great extensive meal was organised to mark the departure of Guruji and there was a huge gathering. The Mughals as well as the Rajputs offered heavy wealth to Guruji.

The royal as well as historical records proclaim that the total amount of money offered amounted to about seven lakhs. Guruji asked the offered amount to be used for the welfare of the people. Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji also instructed Mahant Jivan Das to migrate to south and continue his meditation. Dhubri the resting place of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj was also osculated by Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji and is referred to the Assamese historians as Damdama sahib (Resting place of the Sikh Gurus).

These Sikhs of Dhubri were bestowed with the title of Damdmya and it was their assistance which was sought in all the wars against the invaders. Even during the Anglo Assamese War, these Damdmya Sikhs of Dhubri played a significant role by fighting for the state of Assam. Commemorative monuments of Netai Dhobani have been constructed to mark her historical prevalence at the banks of Brahmaputra River. Also there stands a shrine commemorating the visit of 5 Pir from Malda entitled "5 Pir Dargah" just adjacent to Gurdwara Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Ji, Dhubri, Assam. Also, the historical records are suggestive that Nauwey Patshah Ji has visited the province of Hajo and for this cause, a mountain has been named after Guru Sahib as "Tegh Parbat".

While accessing the literatures related to Dashmesh Pita Satguru Dhan Dhan Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj, I got to know years surpassed after the visits of two Sikh Gurus, the land of

Assam also holds deep association to Dashmesh Pita. A Hukumnama of Kalgidhar Patshah exists in which He has invited the Sikhs to come to Paonta Sahib to celebrate Diwali. The Sangat mentioned in this Hukumnama refers to Delhi, Malwa, Majha, Doaba, Kabul, etc. From Assam, came Ratan Rai – son of Sug Deo along with his parents.

He was 11 years then and his parents gifted Guruji a Panj Kala i.e., a Shastar which can act like 5 weapons together – spear, beam, sword, pistol and a Barcha changing from one weapon to other just by changing the handle. Another was a Parsadi Elephant which had a white lining from head to tail. It also included one sandalwood seat having four layers. In addition to this a golden bowl, a head Kalgi, a bracelet of diamonds and 101 Gold Mohar were also gifted by Raja to Guruji. The Panj Kala Shastar is still present in Vadodara Museum at Gujarat.

While Dashmesh Pita was resting on the banks of Tapi River at Madhya Pradesh, Mahant Jivan Das was too residing in the province about whom we have read earlier. Getting to know of Dashmesh Pita's existence in the province, he walked with the help of a stick and bowed to Guruji. Thus, the conversation commenced between the Mahant & Kalgidhar Pita. Mahant Jivan Das spoke,

“I am the son of rich man who became a mendicant having fell in love with God. I have been roaming from place to place. I practiced Hath Yoga. I read a lot. But this did not give me peace. While roaming, I reached Dacca and met Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji's Sikh Balaki Das. He was waiting for Guru Tegh Bahadur with eagerness. He prepared a spacious house and high seat for him. His mother prepared a dress for Guru by spinning and weaving it herself with the hope that he will come and she will offer the dress to the Guru.

In their company, I left Hath Yog and got in to meditation. I also developed eagerness to meet the Guru. They kept waiting for Him at Dacca. I guessed that the Guru will first reach Dhubri. Being impatient to meet the Guru, I reached there. Guruji came to Dacca first and redeemed his dedicated Sikhs Balaki Das and his old mother. He also prayed about me to the Guru. I met the Guru at Dhubri and watched the Guru in the waves of Brahmaputra as I am watching you in the waters of River Tapti. The Guru blessed me with Nam Dan.

My intellect was dull, mind dirty and body hard which has now changed by your reviving name in it again. I remained with Guru Tegh Bahadur in Assam till he was there and enjoyed his presence. Before leaving Assam, he ordered me to move to South and do meditation in a lonely place. I enquired from the Guru as to why he was sending me to the South while he himself was going to North.

Then Guruji said,

“Do not worry I will meet you there in a different life.”

Now being the son of my master, you have fulfilled the promise.

Dashmesh Pita asked,

“When did you meet him in Assam?”

Mahant Jivan das replied,

I met him in Samwat 1723 (1666 AD). It was the time when news of your birth reached Dhubri. I was present when this news was greeted with a volley of gun fire and beating of drums. All the Sikhs and army of Raja Ram Singh celebrated the event.

The legendary Sikh History of this state goes more profound for me when I traced the connexion of Sher – E – Punjab Maharaja Ranjit Singh Ji with Assam. Legend prevails that once the Ahom King Chandrakanta Singh of Assam sought help from Sher – E – Punjab Maharaja Ranjit Singh Ji to fight against the Burmese Invaders. The Government Historical Record entitles this war as the Battle of Hadirachki. Maharaja Ranjit Singh Ji sent a troop of 500 experienced Sikh Soldiers to assist the king of Ahom Tribe. Most of them died in this war, few returned back while others settled in Assam.

While it was men who formed a chunk of this migration, Mata Ji was the only woman to have come with this group. She was wife of the army commander, Chaitanya Singh, who died in this war. A Gurdwara entitled “Mata Ji Gurdwara” was constructed in 1820 in her memory which still contains a Chakki (flour-mill) and two of her guns. Nand Singh, a police officer belonging to this tribe has authored 15 books and has been awarded with Sahitya Academy Award for contribution to Assamese literature to his credit.

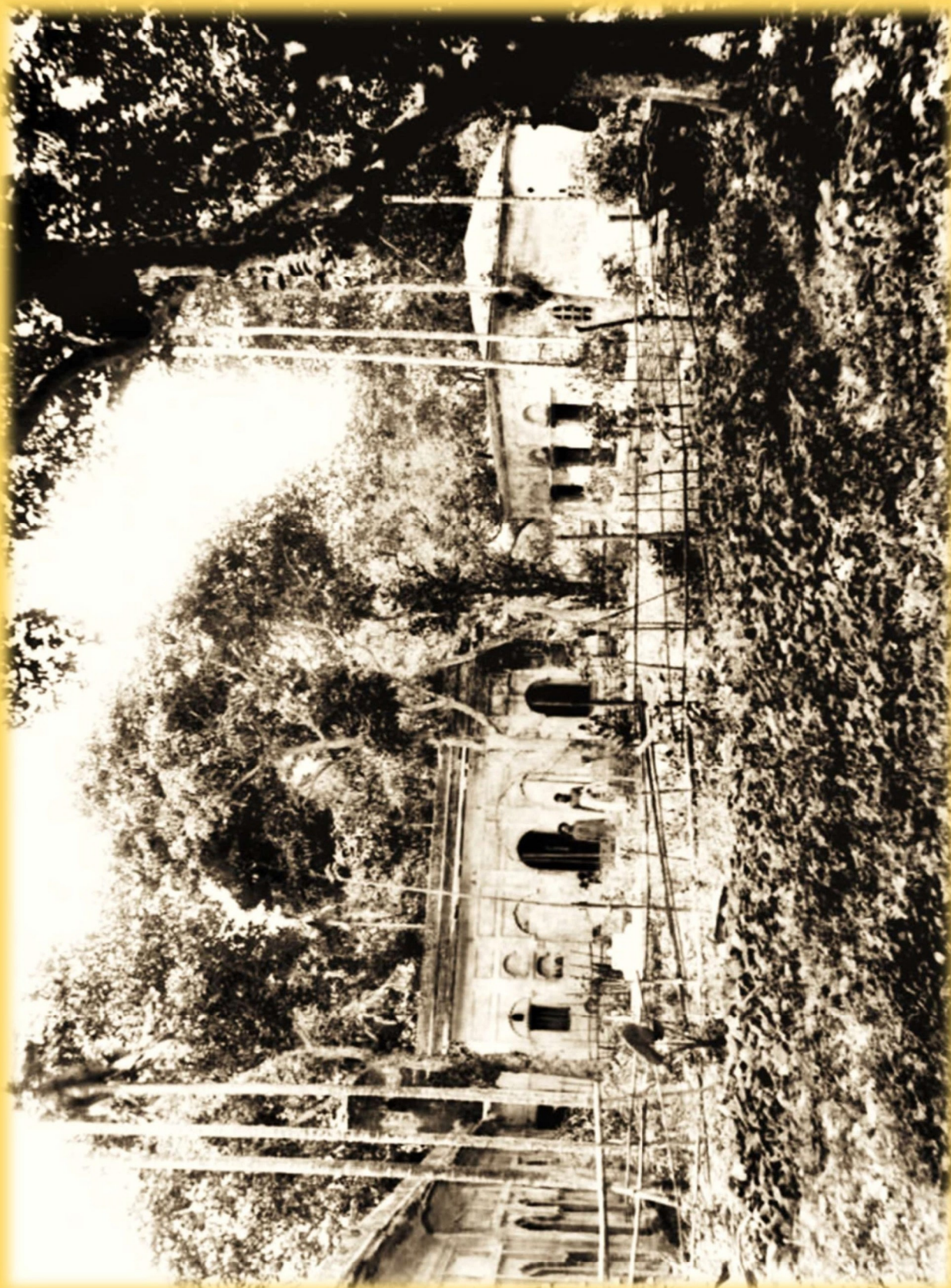
The Assamese Sikhs have managed to diligently hold on to the tenets of Sikhism related to rites of passage, birth, marriage and death, which the researchers deem significant. For instance, every household still has the Nishan Sahib, or the yellow cloth as a marker of Sikh identity, outside homes. Currently, the descendants of these Sikh Soldiers who settled in Assam are found in the areas of Borkhola, Haathi Para, Chappal Mukh, Lanka and Hajo.

These Sikhs have a leaner physique being rice as their staple diet and they lead a mixture life of Assamese and Sikh ethnics. They celebrate Magh Bihu and Sri Sankar Dev Tithi along with Gur Purabs, Lohri and Baisakhi. Even the female Assamese Sikhs are found dressed in traditional Assamese attire. These Sikhs are also termed as Axomiya Sikhs by some scholars.



CHAPTER - III

The Sikh History of Bangladesh



A Rare Image of Gurdwara Guru Nanakshahi, Dhaka (Bangladesh)



ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪਸਾਦਿ



ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਮਾਨੇਜਮੈਂਟ ਕਮਿਟੀ ਬਾਂਗਲਾਦੇਸ਼

Gurdwara Management Committee Bangladesh

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Gurdwara Sangat Tola

14, Sreesh Das Lane
Bangla Bazar
Dhaka 1000

Gurdwara Guru Nanak's Kuan

Rayer Bazar, Dhanmondi
Dhaka

Gurdwara Suthra Shahi

Urdu Road, (Chowk Bazar)
Dhaka.
(Defunct)

Gurdwara Baba Mohan Singh

English Road (Naya Bazar)
Dhaka.
(Defunct)

Sikh Temple Estate

36 Joy Nagar (1st Lane)
Opp. Wali Khan Masjid
Chowk Bazar
Chittagong - 4203

Sikh Temple Estate

Shaheed Lane (Panjabi Lane)
Pahartali
Chittagong - 4202

Guru NANAK Mandir

75/AA,B. Guha Road
(Shib Bari) Ganginar Par
Mymensingh - 2200

Gurdwara Saheb Sylhet

(In Disuse)

Dated: 06 September 2019

Being the President of the organisation – Gurdwara Management Committee Bangladesh, I feel privileged to appreciate, congratulate and honour Mr. Abinash Mahapatra for the vast researches on Sikh History he has done which has taken the shape of 38 books. A book entitled The Sikh History of Bangladesh is one of them. At a tender age of 21, his literary works are not only a boon to the Sikh religion but also for the lovers of Sikh Gurus. His works are incomparable and I can assure that no one has taken such initiative ever in this age. He is youngest of all the authors in the field of Sikh Literature and research. I had the privilege to go through this book and I can briefly express that he has given authentic information regarding the Bangladesh Sikh History which can be considered as an initiative to revive the lost Sikh History of this country. Being a meritorious student & exceptional musician, he has taken up the mission of spreading the essence of Sikh religion to every corner of the globe.

Mr. Abinash might have gone through innumerable pains and paid enormous efforts to bring to the Sikh History in front of the mankind. It is indeed a blessing for him that he could accomplish such deeds at a tender age. In this 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak the Sikh communal will warmly welcome the works of Mr. Abinash. I extend my best wishes and hope that Mr. Abinash will bring out such works in future.

Waheguru Ji ka Khalsa
Waheguru Ji ki Fateh

Parash Lal Beghi

Parash Lal Beghi
President

Gurdwara Management Committee Bangladesh



Associates Address: Sampardai Kaar Sewa, Sant Baba Tara Singh Ji, Sarhali Sahib,
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Co-Associates Address: Bangladesh Gurdwara Management Board, Kolkata, India.

An Introduction to The Bangladesh Sikh History

Self - Spirits alone cannot aid in penning a historical manuscript. It is only the clemency of my Masters – The Sikh Gurus and the supreme formless lord – Waheguru Ji who have chosen a reckless person like me to pen the Sikh History. It is my confidence that if I banquet the Sikh Philosophy without having a prior knowledge of Sikh History and the degree to which the Sikh religion has spread its roots by Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's and other Sikh Gurus travels, then I am a leaf without knowing that I am a part of a tree. The Sikh History if investigated in detail will be considered as an illumination of the soul. Hence, the method of my mission to spread Sikh Theology and Philosophy is only by educating the mass with the Sikh History.

I can affirm and assure that study of the Sikh History is a means of understanding the self to high depths and instigate to build the life in a wiser and serene manner. Bangladesh is the land of lavish green scenery and abundant rivers gives dwelling to the world's lengthiest seashore and largest inlet (Bay of Bengal). Historically, this realm was a part of India and has been reborn twice, once as East Pakistan and again as Bangladesh. Etymologically, the word Bangladesh is derived from kindred Vanga as mentioned in ancient scriptures penned around 500 B.C. to 500 A.D. This historicity of this place was highly augmented by the visit of Sikh Gurus – Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji.

After Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji, this place was blessed by the letters of Dashmesh Pita Satguru Dhan Dhan Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj. Plentiful Gurdwaras were recognized in their reminiscence. By the time the Sikh Gurus voyaged this region, it was under the province of West Bengal in India. It was in 1971, west Bengal was partitioned and a separate country Bangladesh was formed. There were 152 Gurdwaras in Bangladesh of which 32 were in Dhaka only. Those were the black days when the war of liberation befell on this country and the Sikh Shrines suffered huge loss for this. Only 5 Historical Gurdwaras are left with Gurdwara Nanakshahi as the principle Gurdwara.

If I generate a comprehensive and chronological plotting of the places enduring today allied with Guru Sahibs, it would be –

1. Sylhet
2. Dhaka
3. Mymensingh
4. Chittagong

My empathetic thankfulness to The Hon. Prime Minister of Bangladesh and Chairman of Gurdwara Management Committee Bangladesh – Mr. D Poresh Lal Beghi, Mr. Singhbir Singh from Chittagong and Mr. Bikramjit Singh from Mymensingh and mostly to Gyani Kamaljit Singh – The Head Granthi of Gurdwara Nanakshahi Dhaka who were my paramount forte while I was researching on the areas of the country – Bangladesh.

The Sikh History of Bangladesh

As per the Historical Records of Bangladesh, Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji came here from Assam. The records address Guruji as Nanak Shah. Seated on a boat Guruji and Bhai Mardana Ji reached Sylhet situated on the banks of Surma River. Guruji stayed in this place nearly for a month. In Sylhet, there persisted a Tantric Intellectual whose name was Devi Prasad Bose. He misused his occult powers to annoy the locals. When he came in front of Guruji, he tried to do the same which he used to do with the locals but his tricks were of no use. Getting exhausted, he surrendered to Guruji and turned His disciple. The historical records too proclaim that the disciple of Nizamuddin Auliya – Shah Jalala and disciple of Baba Farid - Sheikh Ibrahim met Guruji here and were intensely influenced by Guruji's Godliness and turned His disciples.

Subsequent to Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji, it was 9th Sikh Guru – Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji who visited Bangladesh. Guruji reached Sylhet but did not reside for much time in this region. He spent only the rainy season. Even after Guruji's departure, the Sikhs residing in this region were highly fortunate to receive Hukumnamas from Dashmesh Pita Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji. In one of the Hukumnama, Guru Pita had penned –

**“Bhai Hulas Chand, Bakshi Chand, Sarbat Dhake di Sangat, Chitaganv di Sangat,
Sondip ki Sangat, Sylhet di Sangat, Sarbat Sangat Guru Rakhe gaa, achaa haathi jangi
bhejna aval, Sangat nihali hove”**

(It is hereby commanded to Bhai Hulas Chand, Bakshi Chand and to the Sangat of Dhaka, Chittagong and Sondip and Sylhet to deliver combat elephants; Blessings to the Sangat)

The above inscription of Guru Pita clearly mentions about the rich and culturally developed Sikh Establishments in this province.

Gyani Kamaljit Singh – The Head Granthi of Gurdwara Guru Nanakshahi, Dhaka explained me the visit of Guruji to Dhaka in the following manner.

From Sylhet, when Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji started departing, Bhai Mardana Ji probed,

“Guruji, where do we go now?”

Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji replied,

**“Mardana Ji, I am immersed in God's love. To wherever He guides me, I will move on
according to His guidance”.**

Bhai Mardana Ji spoke,

“Let me seek information about the near about places”.

Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji grinned and uttered,

“Mardana Ji, just wait. The Master does everything”.

Soon when Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji finished saying this, a yacht arrived. The yacht man said,

“My Master, I have come here to fetch you”

Hearing this Guruji smiled and sat on his yacht. Subsequently sailing for some time, Guruji reached near Shivpur Village which lies to the north of Dhaka. The region had eminent river banks for transport, ports, warehouses and marketplace which proves the region to be well established at that era. The Shabads were sung all the time. The local congregations even started increasing. On a morning, hearing the Shabads, the people were so enchanted that they started felling at Guru Sahib's feet. The city people as well as the local saints started thronging to Guruji. All were blessed with the Lord's name and turned into Guruji's disciples.

A great saint of Dhaka named Nathe Shah came to Guruji and was blessed to be His disciple. Another saint named Loonia who practiced Hath Yoga was blessed by Guruji and was shown the path to do recitation of Waheguru name with intense love. A Muslim saint named Sheikh Ahmed who kept rigorous fasts could not attain peace of mind. At last, he came to Guruji seeking His guidance. Guruji guided him to do the Waheguru name recitation. In the due course of time, the Muslim saint even turned to Guruji's disciple. Some more saints namely Rewa Das, Shyamlal Nath, Chandan Nath and Narayan Das who were practicing sternness even surrendered to Guruji and learnt the lesson of Waheguru name recitation.

Once while in Dhaka, Bhai Mardana Ji probed Guruji,

“The saints who came to you were on execution of several religious penances. Why could not they attain the pure state of mind?”

Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji retorted,

Mardana Ji, most of the saints get busy in Yogic practices which they claim to be the detachment of mind and end everything there itself. Some saints get into supernatural powers for worldly gains and turn hypnotists (Tantric). Some saints combine these both but do not have any eagerness to reach the Lord.

Howsoever one may try to practice severe religious penances, can never reach the Lord unless an infinite love is emerged within the soul of which the Lord Himself is thirst of. Nanak speaks the truth that the true path to attain the eternal bliss is to recite the name Waheguru.

The only problematic ailment which triumphed over this region was dearth of drinking water. The local inhabitants with anguish carried their observances to Guru Sahib and sought His blessings for their glitches. Guru Sahib made a well unearthed in Zafarabad village and consecrated it for the comfort of the local inhabitants. An unhealthy man who was incorrigible since years got instantly cured after using the water of the well.

This news banquet far and wide and people started congregating adjacent to well. They used to carry vessels jam-packed with water from this well and used it for countless determinations. When the king emanated to recognize the implication of this well, he assembled a hefty cistern for the visitors where they could take immersion. With the blessings of Waheguru Ji, Guruji put all the saints in single platform of Waheguru Name recitation and a strong Holy congregation was formed in Dhaka. This place suffered great losses during the War of Liberation. The Gurdwara of Zafarabad was also demolished. Currently, the well dug under Guru Sahib's guidance for the benefit of the locals lies at House No. 278, Road No. 26. The person who was allotted with his place, purchased it with 8000 takas, got a building built in

1968 and rented it to the UN Employees.

After Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's departure, the places related to Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji in Dhaka had no signatures of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji. The eldest son of Guru Har Gobind Sahib Ji (the 6th Sikh Guru), Bhai Gurditta Ji appointed Almast to excavate the footprints of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji in Dhaka. Almast with enormous efforts traced Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's travels and located the spot which comes under Sultanpur Mouja and then established a Manji which later came to be known as Gurdwara Nanakshahi. Initially, the construction of Gurdwara Nanakshahi was started by Bhai Natha who at first took the initiative of digging a well in the premises whose reform was made by Mahant Prem Das in 1833.

Gyani Kamaljit Singh then explained the visit of the 9th Sikh Guru – Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji in the province of Dhaka. Guruji reached Dhaka from Sylhet and remained here for two years. At first Guruji visited the Dharamshala commemorated in the memory of Patshahi 1. The locals throng to Guruji have the Darshan of 9th Nanak. Before Guruji's influx, there was an earnest but celebrated character named Bhai Balaki Das who used to sojourn with his old mother. He kept a cradle in his dwelling imploring and expecting that Guruji will visit his abode and sit on his cradle. Guru Sahib retorted his prayers, visited his abode and sat on his crib. Congregations were used to be held in his dwelling and Guru Sahib enthused the inhabitants to get erected a Guru Ghar where congregations can be held. The local governor Shaista Khan was very much stimulated by Guru Sahib's conspicuous personality.

The consequence of this was excises were collected from the unabridged town excluding the Guru Ghar of Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji. He dispensed a printed order (Pharman) with stamp of Mughal Ruler Aurangzeb. When Guru Sahib started to sally Dhaka, the old mother of Bhai Balaki Das having tears in her eyes prayed to Guru Sahib that it was a prodigious preference for her to have Darshan of Guru Sahib daily for an extensive stretch but after His exodus, she will not grip any means to have His Darshan. Guru Sahib on hearing the appeal of old mother called for an artist and guaranteed her that she can have His Darshan in His absenteeism through the photograph.

Bhai Balaki Das being a celebrated personality of the province and having decent relationships with the governor – Shaista Khan, called upon Ahsan the imperial artiste to get the portrait of Guru Sahib tinted. The painter gave fine touch and painted an exact portrait of Guru Sahib in sitting posture. But when the painter began to paint Guru Sahib's face, he could not visualize the face due to severe glows which emerged from Guru Sahib's face. So, Guru Sahib Himself took the brush and gave a final touch to the painting. Guru Sahib Himself gave this painting to the old mother. The above history also finds its mention in Sikh Historical Records namely Mahima Prakash and Suraj Prakash Granth.

Gyani Kamaljit Singh Ji also suggested that afterwards Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji departed towards Chittagong, the Dharamshala was looked after by Nanak Panthis, the prominent among which was Bhai Natha about whom we have discussed earlier. He had dug a well in the Dharamshala complex and an inscription in Bengali Language was placed on this well. The inscription suggested the entire history of travels of Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji. But it was damaged in the War of Liberation and is no longer available. He then read the

following from an English translation of the Bengali inscription –

"The Sikh organization is located in a big compound, which can be entered through an arched gateway from the northern by-lane. The interior falls into two parts, the temple cum- residential complex on the east, and the western half containing a masonry tank, a well, and other Samadhi (death memorials). The eastern half consists of a rectangular court, on the northern and southern sides of which range residential rooms, while its western side. In the court is a vedi (raised seat) on which is set a black stone attaining footprints, (probably of some Guru). The temple consists of multiple rooms arranged around a central square room, -four rooms on its four sides and other four at the corners, in all nine. All these are interconnected by arched doorways from all around.

The roof is a flat vault resting on coping arches at the sides. In the central room is a small platform on which is still kept the Guru Granth. The ground plan of this temple exactly follows the arrangement of rooms in Bibi Pari's tomb. (Bibi Pari, or Lady Fairy, was daughter of Nawab Shaista Khan who died in 1684 A.D.) Nawab Islam Khan (1606-1613 A.D.) named Jahangir agar, and sufficed the capital to this city from Raj Mahal, which then lost its strategic importance. Shah Jahan visited it in 1624 A.D. Sultan Mohammed Shuja temporarily transferred the capital to Raj Mahal for his self-defense, but six years before Guru Tegh Bahadur arrived Mir Jumla again transferred it to the Dhaka.

In 1664 A.D. Shaista Khan nephew of the beautiful Empress Nur Jahan and brother of the Lady who sleeps in Taj Mahal was appointed Viceroy of Bengal. Shaista Khan was the noblest ruler that India was fortunate to have, after Akbar. He ruled Bengal with great compassion, and noble concern for all communities. While Aurangzeb had started eliminating Hindu and non-Muslim officials, the key posts in his administration were held by the Hindus. Even- his Prime Minister (Diwan) was a Hindu.

Rankin in his Dhaka Diaries (1668 A.D.) states that the following were the principal non-Muslim Officials: Diwan Raja Bhagwant Dasro, Rai Nand Lall, Peshdast of Diwan: Keshi Dasi House, Diwan: Murlidhar; Muttshiz Parbal Das, Chief Mutsady: Manohar Das; Mutsady: Shib Ram; Superintendent of Finances and Ships: Kishore Das. Commander of 15,000: Raja Subal Singh Sisodia.' Out of these, Raja Bhagwant Das who was the Diwan at the time of Guru Tegh Bahadur's arrival, is said to be a Nanak Panthi. From Raj Mahal to Dhaka Guru Tegh Bahadur and his entourage covered the journey in about nine days.

A royal reception was awaiting them at Dhaka. The Dhaka Sangat had built a house specially for Guru Tegh Bahadur's stay, which is now known as Guru Tegh Bahadur Sangat and is situated in the Sangat Tola lane. The Mohalla is also called Sangat Tola. The rich and the poor, the high and the low, men, royal men, and children flocked to see the prophet from the Punjab, the eighth successor of Guru Nanak. Dhaka was the most prosperous place in India. Wealth and gold were in abundance."

Today, at this place stands Gurdwara Guru Nanak Shahi. The structure was modelled after the design of Yadgar of Nawab Shaista Khan's granddaughter Paree Bibi who faced a premature death in 1684. The construction of the building was completed around 1830 and the present day Gurdwara is the foundation which was made in 1989- 1990. The Gurdwara Nanakshahi holds the following relics at present –

1. Wooden Sandals (Kharvan) of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji.
2. An ancient painting of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji.
3. Two old Handwritten manuscript of Guru Granth Sahib Ji each of 18 * 12 inches comprising of 1336 pages with each page decorated with various colours. It weighs 80 lbs.
4. The well dug by Bhai Natha
5. An ancient tank
6. A Sikh Research Centre with numerous materials.

This Gurdwara is the principle Gurdwara of the country and Gurdwara Management Committee Bangladesh administers all the Gurdwaras of the country from this place.

The relics of Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji included the cot on which Guru Sahib sat, the painting of Guru sahib by royal painter Ahsan, the written order (Pharman) stating the exception of tax of Guru Ghar and hand written birs of Guru Granth Sahib. All these relics were preserved with Mata Kanchan Ji, a descendent of Bhai Balaki Das till 1971 prior to which she shifted to Kolkata with her Sikh Baptized son – Kirpal Singh Ji in fear of War of Liberation of Bangladesh. Mata Kanchan Ji was also given the designation of Sikhar Maa meaning the mother of Sikhs.

It was during the war of liberation, the Sikh Shrines suffered great loss in which nearly 16 out of 20 Historical Gurdwaras are demolished. The relics preserved in Bhai Balaki das Ji's residence later came to be known as Gurdwara Sangat Tola were distorted. The painting suffered great damage for which only few portions and the face was visible. These ruined relics were discovered by Captain Bhag Singh in the year 1975 which were preserved in Gurdwara Nanakshahi Dhaka and some in Gurdwara Sangat Tola.

From Dhaka, Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji voyaged towards Mymensingh which is 120 kms away on the banks of Brahmaputra River. Sardar Bikramjit Singh of Mymensingh was a great support throughout my researches pertaining to this province. He explained me that the place where Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji sat is currently in the estate of Ganginarpar. When Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji started singing His Shabads, the congregation grew like flies and people were deeply influenced by Guru Sahib's personality. They prayed Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji regarding the requirement of fresh drinking water for which Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji ordered for a well to be burrowed. To everyone's surprise, the water of this well as sweet as nectar.

Years after Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji, it was the 9th Sikh Guru – Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji who proceeded towards Chittagong and Sondip Islands from the province of

Dhaka where a huge number of populaces turned His disciples. Dohari Bazar was a prominent destination of Guruji. Here a dog turned to be the precious of Guruji and at an occurrence was seized by a crocodile. Guruji ordered the crocodile to rescue the dog and it did so. This message spread like a war fire and a Muslim Zamindar turned Guruji's most devout disciple and had an autograph from Guruji. From here, Guruji travelled to Kanchan Nagar where a large Sangat was established.

A Gurdwara was constructed in Mymensingh around 1945 named Guru Nanak Mandir which can still be visualized. Bhai Heera Singh was the initial chosen administrator of this Gurdwara. Still the water of the well excavated under Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's instructions is found sweetened and fresh as it was. Thousands of Sikhs gather here on occasions like Baisakhi and Gur Purabs and the Sewa yet continues.

Tramping from Mymensingh towards Kolkata, Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji rested for few days in Chittagong. Here Mr. Sonu Singh assisted me with great support and knowledge while I was researching through the Sikh History. The terrestrial measurement of Chittagong positions that this town is located on the right bank of Karnaphuli River. It is even considered to be a chief harbor of Bangladesh. It is the country's largest port. The place where Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji stayed is 20 kms away from river mouth. Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji erected a Manji here and commended the preservation of the Manji to Bhai Jhandia who was an operative of the Chittagong King named Raja Sudhar Sen.

The king got infuriated on hearing this and beckoned Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji to his Citadel. But the king's son named Indra Sen who was an earnest admirer of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji familiarized his father with Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and prejudiced him to alter his mind. The king got ardent to Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and presented Him with appreciated gifts. The home-grown inhabitants prayed Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji for fresh water as the water in the region was brackish.

Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Himself dug a well from which sweet water up came to everyone's astonishment. Departing from this place, Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji reached at Paharthali where a Muslim saint used to reside. After an in - depth conversation of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji with the saint and his disciples, they could realize the divinity of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and bowed in front of Him.

In the due course of time, the well was damaged but due to the massive exertions of Baba Sukha Singh and Bangladesh Gurdwara Management Committee, the well was revived and surprisingly, the water of well is still fresh and sweet. Few years later, the Manji was converted to Gurdwara Sahib. The Gurdwara and well still exists where the devout Sikhs come for offering their prayers. The Gurdwara is named as Gurdwara Sikh Temple Estate, Guru Nanak Building. With numerous requests from the disciples, the local administration constructed a Gurdwara here in Paharthali in the memory of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji.

From Chittagong, Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji proceeded towards Kolkata. The Gurdwara at Paharthali got severely damaged and was ruined after The War of Liberation of 1971. Years later, some of the Railway Contractors got settled here who repaired the Gurdwara and at present, the administration of Gurdwara is under Gurdwara Management Committee, Bangladesh and a Muslim man named Mr. Ali is looking after the daily rituals.

Then it was Mr. Parash Lal Beghi who emerged as a sacred sign for me. All the Sikh Heritage sites are being maintained under Gurdwara Management Committee, Dhaka and he is the current Chairperson of this organization. After a comprehensive discussion regarding my researches with him, he was so overwhelmed that in his enthusiasm, he proclaimed me to be the first and only Sikh Historian who has worked to such an extent. The evidence of this appreciation has been attached hereby. He even referred my work to be most authentic among all the other works done on Bangladesh Sikh History till date.

With tears of joy in my eyes, I just remembered the verses from Satguru Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Maharaj –

**“Aap Karta, Aap Bhugtaa, Aap Karan Kiya
Dinwant Nanak se hi jaane, Jinni Har Ras Piya...”**



CHAPTER - IV

The Sikh History of West Bengal



Gurdwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha in 1944, Kolkata (West Bengal)



ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਟੱਡੀ ਸਰਕਲ, ਈਸਟਰਨ ਰੀਜਨ (ਬੰਗਾਲ, ਬਿਹਾਰ, ਝਾਰਖੰਡ, ਉੜੀਸਾ)

ਰੀਜਨਲ ਦਫਤਰ
ਕੇਂਦਰੀ ਦਫਤਰ

: ਗੋਬਿੰਦਨਗਰ, ਆਸਨਸੋਲ, ਫੋਨ ਨੰ- ੯੬੧੪੮੭੩੭੬੨, ੯੮੦੦੪੭੯੬੩, ੯੪੩੪੦੦੭੮੬੦
: ਮਾਡਲ ਟਾਊਨ ਐਕਸਟੈਂਸ਼ਨ, ਲੁਧਿਆਣਾ (ਪੰਜਾਬ) ੧੪੧੦੦੨

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ਹਵਾਲਾ

ਮਿਤੀ ੨/੧੦/੨੦

Satguru Baba Nanak Shah descended on the soil of East India during His 1 Udasi to liberate the people from superstitions, hypocrisy, disarranged lifestyle, fear of Pandits and Maulvis and also from the discrimination based on caste and social status. Visiting the Indian States of Bihar, Assam and the country of Bangladesh, Hazrat Baba Nanak Shah ensued towards the present-day Indian state of West Bengal where He stayed for few days while proceeding towards Jagannath Puri, Odisha.

The book "The Sikh History of West Bengal" authored by a youngest Sikh Historian, Abinash Mahapatra of Odisha is an antique piece of Sikh Literature produced on this subject till date. Turning over the pages of this book, one can perceive that this young author in his age tender age of 22 has endured ample pain to trace the Sikh History of the places visited by Baba Nanak Shah, the period post to His visit, the visit of 9th Sikh Guru — Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Ji and the events leading to the establishment of Khalsa Raj in the state of West Bengal.

The young author in his works has portrayed an authentic and vivid depiction of Sikh History pertaining to these regions and his writings are purely based on the Gurmat Malyada and Gurmat Philosophy, hence the books authored by Mr. Abinash bears the concept of an essential read for the students of history and comparative religions as well. Besides all, being a Non-Sikh, he has done such extensive works on the Sikh History that I can proclaim his works should be termed as a blessing.

Being the appointed Secretary of Sri Guru Gobind Singh Study Circle (West Bengal), I do hereby enthusiastically appreciate Abinash for his noble deeds and extend my best wishes to perform the Sikh Dharam Prachar in the same way further in his life. May Wahegunt Ji bequeath him with strength and courage.

Gurvindar Singh
Gurvindar Singh
Secretary

An Introduction to The West Bengal Sikh History

Books of Historical Importance especially the Sikh Historical records! If one tries to outline them, they can be demarcated as a means of portable without moving the feet. Even sensitively, in jiffy of gloom when the mind halts discerning, these fonts utter the words of inner emotion which we cannot perceive. The Sikh Literary springs are ice choppers that disrupt the sea of opinions icy inside us. For me construing and constructing Sikh Literatures is a solitary mean. Each word from the Sikh Literature is a life tempting suppository. I think by producing Sikh Literatures, I will be conscious of thousand lives before I decease. Hence, I aim my Sikh works on two phases i.e., investigation and reflection.

West Bengal earlier epitomized as Bongo Desh derives its name from the ancient kingdom of Vanga. This state pertains to an integral state of India abiding with rich cultural and religious heritages, an abode to the rise of chief spiritual saints, a silver of fertile and densely populated land running from tea – draped Himalayan foothills to the steamy man groves of the Bay of Bengal. It was an additional spiritual upliftment when Sikh Religion was introduced into the regime of West Bengal. The Sikh religion was established in this region by the travels of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji who arrived this state while returning from Bangladesh. If I go for a complete chronological mapping of the places visited by Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji in this state, it would lead to the following sequence according to Guruji's footprints –

1. Kolkata
2. Hooghly
3. Nadiya (Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's Birthplace)
4. Murshidabad
5. Malda
6. Kenduli (Bhagat Jai Dev Ji's Birthplace)
7. Bardhaman - Katwa
8. Bishnupur
9. Midnapur (Chandrakona)
10. Kontai

From Kontai, Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji took the Jagannath Sadak and proceeded towards Odisha which was then termed as Odra Desh. Years later, this state was blessed by the visit of Ninth Sikh Guru – Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji but the path taken by Him differed when He entered Odisha via Mayurbhanj. The arrival Agraghari Sikhs to this province adds its significance to a great extent in the Sikh History. In this book, we will not only have comprehensive analysis of the visits of Sikh Gurus and Udasi influxes, but also, we will have an in-depth exploration on the Agraghari Sikhs prevailing in this state. I hope this book may enthrall the readers and help me fulfilling my mission in spreading the essence of Sikh Religion.

The Sikh History of West Bengal

As mentioned in my book “The Sikh History of Bangladesh”, Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji took the route via Chittagong to West Bengal. Paharthali in Chittagong was the last place visited by Guruji in Bangladesh. From Chittagong, Guruji and Bhai Mardana Ji reached Kolkata, West Bengal. Dumdum in Kolkata is the first place where Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji visited. Guruji stayed here for few days and the local inhabitants started approaching by heeding to His Shabads. They sought His blessings and turned His disciples.

Years after, the memory of Guru Sahib was under the maintenance of Udasi Mahant. Then it was the visit of the Ninth Sikh Guru – Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji to Dum Dum while He was entering Kolkata from Chittagong, Bangladesh. This place was ignored and thus during the British Rule, an airport was constructed and the troops got settled amongst which maximum were Sikhs. The Sikh troops urged the historicity of that region and they donated a piece of land for the construction of a Gurdwara. Although the specific place of Guruji’s rest couldn’t be traced, but in the memory of His footprints, a Gurdwara was constructed named Gurdwara Guru Nanak Dev Ji which is currently extant adjacent to gate no.2 of Netaji Subash Chandra Bose International Airport, Kolkata.

Years surpassed and India attained freedom. The Sikh troops dispersed to various parts of the city and thus the Gurdwara was under the province of Granthi. Some exploitations occurred and hence, the local Sangat purchased a new piece of land and got a new Gurdwara constructed in the name of Gurdwara Sikh Sangat, Dumdum which is currently extant adjacent to gate no.1 of Netaji Subash Chandra Bose International Airport, Kolkata. A small Gurdwara was raised but at present date, this Gurdwara has taken a colossal edifice which even provides refuge to thousands of travelers.

I recall it was in the month of March around the year 2017 that I had been to Gurdwara Sikh Sangat Dumdum to deliver a Katha in the newly renovated Darbar Hall. After Samapti (completion) of my Katha, myself and the Gurdwara Committee Members were on a discussion. Sardar Gurnam Singh Ji, the general secretary of the committee spoke,

“Abinash Ji, there’s a great mystery behind the Historical Gurdwara stationed near Gate No. 2 of Airport which is called as Gurdwara Guru Nanak Dev Ji, Dumdum. You are very well acquainted to the historicity of that Gurdwara. But perhaps you might be unknown of the facts pertaining to its sanctity.

After the Sikh Troops migrated to various portions of the city, the Gurdwara Sahib came under the province of the Granthi and soon after his decease, his wife’s greed aroused and she thought of making the Gurdwara Property her personal asset. She even rented a few portions of the Gurdwara’s land and sold the rest. The Daswandh collected were used for her personal comforts.

The Divine Justice casted its shadow and she faced the consequences for her deeds. Her family life was disturbed even some were deceased. Her children departed and out of pain realizing her faults, she sought forgiveness from Waheguru Ji and returned all the property of Gurdwara as they were earlier.

On another instance, a Govt. employee planned and demolished the entire Gurdwara Sahib. Within a span of few days, he lost his job and even suffered severe losses.

Though the Gurdwara Sahib was rebuilt, even the same strategy was planned to be executed by another Govt. Employ. He couldn't demolish the structure but faced death. Such is the significance of this Gurdwara and at present, it serves as a centre of meeting for the Gurdwaras of Bangladesh”.

From Dumdum, Guruji followed the banks of Ganga River prior to Kalighat while entering the city, the evidence of which is still persisting in the form of two Nanak Panthi Matth where two Handwritten Saroop of Satguru Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Maharaj are installed. While at Kalighat, sauntering along the banks of river Ganges, Guruji observed that a woman was suffering worst of her conditions. Her head was shaved, the utensils she uses have to be kept separate and she was wearing only one Dhoti around her waist to cover herself. Guruji went to her with a grin on face and probed gently,

“Mai, why are you sitting isolated with these appearances?”

The woman with tear – filled eyes retorted,

“Holy man, I am a widow. Those women who turn widows with the will of God has to face a lot of oppression and high – handedness. They are treated as untouchables and hence, this is my status quo.”

Suddenly, some priests and inhabitants who were discerning the scenario came rushing towards Guruji and inquired,

“What category of Holy Man are you? It is just your measly appearance without any knowledge. Don't you know she is a widow and hence untouchable? Women bear the status of a servant and their identity comes from their husband. Hence, when her husband dies, she is cursed. In Ramayana, Tulsi Das Ji inscribes rightly –

**“Pashu, gavar, chor ari nari
Chaaron taaran ke adhikari”**

(A beast, rustic, thief and a woman all the four can be tamed, only by giving them a beating with stick).

Guruji comprehended whole of this agony and uttered,

“The True Lord is the Master of this universe. Millions of saints like Tulsi Das have been misguided for they forgot the True Lord and sang the praises of Devi Devtaa. I worship none except the True Lord. Each living creature is a form of the True Lord. The state of realizing God is to observe Him in each and every individual.

A woman is like Mother Earth. As the Earth provides comforts, sustains us and is impartial, ignoring any differences between the one who digs with spades and picks (a laborer) and the one who applies sandal paste to one's body (a comfort loving Pandit), same is the nature of a person who has realized divine awareness.

The one with such nature can never be cursed. A woman is a guide and sustainer as a mother. She is the honor of the house as a wife, pious affection as a sister, a sympathizer as a daughter and she is the foundation of a home as a daughter – in – law. It is like committing suicide to imprecate such a virtuous soul. The edict of the

True Lord is immutable, hence never curse a woman.”

The people contemporary at that spot comprehended their mistakes and sought mercy from the Benevolent Master. Getting them blessed, Guruji insisted the woman to accompany Him and sat few distance away from where the above-mentioned instance occurred. Guruji commenced His Shabad tuned to the Rabab of Bhai Mardana. People in hoi polloi gathered around Guruji. Soon after concluding the Shabad, Guruji uttered,

“Mardana Ji, I ordain this place to be remembered as Bara Sikh Sangat (Grand Congregation of the Sikhs).”

Amazed by the words of Guruji, Bhai Mardana Ji probed,

“Guruji! You have enthralled much bigger gatherings and assemblies with your ambrosial Divine words, but You did not term any gathering as Bara Sangat; here people have gathered in very small number still You have termed it Bara Sangat.”

With a grin on face, Guruji retorted,

Mardana Ji! For the first time I have given place on my right hand side to the down – trodden, censured and disdained woman in this Sangat.

Due to such a great revolutionary change and a big achievement, I name this holy assembly as Bara Sikh Sangat.

The greatness of Guruji’s personality spread like a wild fire and thus arrived the Local Raja with his officials to meet Guruji and seek His blessings to protect His kingdom from the epidemic which had broken down. Thus, ordered the Master to the King,

“O King! Instruct your kingdom’s residents to chant Satnaam Waheguru. The True Lord will be merciful and everything will be as fit as a flea”.

The words of the Master befallen factual and the king tuned His follower. The king requested Guruji to stay in His palace but Guruji denied. He blessed the king and instructed him to merge in the ecstasy of Naam Simran. The king donated the piece of land in the name of Guruji to commemorate His visit. Hereby, I am quoting an extract from the book “The Career and Legends of Vasco Da Gama” written by Sanjay Subramaniam and published in the year 1977 by Cambridge University Press bearing the ISBN No. 0521470722. According to the author, Vasco Da Gama was made the second viceroy of Portugal in 1524.

But before this he had three voyages to India in 1498-99, 1502-03 and 1523-24. His ship was unloaded in Hooghly. In connection with his business, he happened to visit Bada Bazar and had a fortune of having Darshan of Guruji while He was explaining the Bani – Dakhani Omkar. Vasco Da Gama was accompanied by a Sikh who translated for him the utterances of Guru Sahib. The words of Guru Sahib had profound impact on him and led him to be His follower. Years passed by and the memory of Guru Sahib’s visit was in a ramshackle state. The Sixth Sikh Guru – Satguru Shri Guru Har Gobind Ji sent Bhai Almast Ji as a chief missionary to Bengal to propagate the principles of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and get

the places renovated standing in the memory of Guru Sahib's visit.

Bhai Almast Ji had done extensive deeds and thus was attracted the Ninth Sikh Guru – Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji to this state. Guruji visited this place and stayed for few days in this province. Today, a magnificent Gurdwara constructed by Khatri Merchants – Omichand and Raja Huzoori Mal with the aid of some Sikhs stands to commemorate the visits of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji in the alike title as proclaimed by Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji – Gurdwara Bara Sikh Sangat while that of Satguru Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Ji – Gurdwara Chota Sikh Sangat located in the Bara Bazar, Mahatma Gandhi Road, Kolkata.

Sauntering from this place, Guruji rested in an orchard and commenced His Shabad to the tune of Bhai Mardana Ji's Rabab. The planter of this orchard got profoundly inclined towards Guruji and sought His blessings. Guruji probed him,

“Can u convey to whom does this orchard belong to?”

The planter bowed in deep reverence near Guruji and retorted,

**“It belongs to my Master who is a Zamindar here. He is a very pious man and greatly
revers any saint to whom he meets”.**

Saying so, the planter departed and communicated to the Zamindar regarding the visit of a saint and his disciple to his garden. The Zamindar's joys knew no bounds and he rushed to his garden to meet Guruji. He fell at His feet and sought blessings. Guruji blessed him and instructed him to worship the True Lord for the real contentment in life. With a grin on face, Guruji uttered,

**“Nobleman, you are owning a nice orchard and your planter too is a pious man. It's all
the blessings of the True Lord. Always serve and feed the needy and the poor. Respect
saints and adhere to their teachings”.**

The Zamindar was greatly moved by the words of Guruji and turned into His follower. Profoundly influenced by Guruji's personality, he uttered –

**“Master, till now this orchard was mine. But now it belongs to You. It's no longer my
Bagh (Garden). From now on, it's Guru ka Bagh (the garden of the Guru)”.**

This place was renovated by Bhai Almast ji at the epoch when he was sent by the sixth Sikh Guru – Satguru Shri Guru Har Gobind. At present, this place is located in Baghmari, Kolkata and a Gurdwara Sahib entitled – Gurdwara Guru ka Bagh stands in commemoration of the visits of two Sikh Gurus.

From Hooghly, following the banks of Hooghly river, Guruji traversed towards south and reached Nadiya. Nadiya is one of the most important pilgrimage of the Hindus as it is the birthplace of great Indian saint – Chaitanya Mahaprabhu commonly named as Nimai. By the time Guruji reached this place, the village was imbibed in Krishna consciousness which was a strong wide spread by the saint Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and his disciples. While Guruji was

in Nadiya, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was wandering in his mission to spread the Krishna Consciousness. Hence, both the saints could not encounter here.

Seeing the people misguided, Guruji commenced His Shabad, to the tune of Bhai Mardana Ji's Rabab and the local populace started to throng around Guruji. He gave the knowledge of God consciousness rather Krishna consciousness and made the people realize the essence of the True Lord. Guruji advised them –

“Divinity can never be attained by wearing costumes, applying vermilions and keeping fasts. Ritualistic methodology is never pleased to Almighty. A noble soul, heart filled with love and devotion and chanting of the name are the only ways to attain spiritual bliss.”

Guruji stayed here for days and as the days surpassed, people started to flock like swarm of bees and were deeply impressed by Guruji's attributes and words. Guruji blessed them with the concept of Naam Simran and ensued.

Traversing towards north of Nadia following the banks of Ganga River, Guruji reached Murshidabad. A large congregation was established here the people of which were devoutly dedicated to Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji. One person who got dyed in the Lord's Love was an in – setter of jewels, whose name was Sooja. Though this person was honest in earning and God – fearing, he did not find mental solace at any place.

The day he met Guruji, he got profoundly attracted. His visit to Guru Sahib turned out to be regular. Every day, he would emanate restlessly to have a glimpse of Guruji and pin his ears back to the Shabad. The divine love for Guruji got unfathomable and his inner mind acquired to compose poetry. He inscribed poetic verses in praises of Guruji in Bengali language. Sooja emanated to be known as Sant Sooja and he guided the followers of Guruji in this region. Records even prevail that this place was visited by Satguru Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Maharaj. In Murshidabad, there was Udasi controlled Gurdwara pertaining to Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji which is now in a dilapidated state with a Nishan Sahib prevalent to mark its historicity.

From Murshidabad, Guruji trailed towards Malda or Malwa situated on the banks of Mahanadi River near its conjunction with Kalindari River. Guruji visited a place named Sarabari located in Old Malda. This place was well marked for its superlative quality of mangoes for which this place is still famous. Here lived a man whose name was Ram Dev Babu. Though a wealthy person having the lifestyles of a king, leading a worldly and luxurious life, Ram Dev Babu was a pious man. He owned a garden where Guruji took refuge. For the refuge of saints and sadhus, Ram Dev Babu had got constructed a guest room in his garden.

Once, while Ram Dev Babu was toiling in his garden, Bhai Mardana Ji was playing the Rabab and Guruji was singing the Shabad. Guruji's euphonious voice had magical effect on Ram Dev Babu. His mind turned from worldly possessions and he started visiting Guruji twice a day. He got very much attracted to Guruji and did not let Him leave. Guruji stayed here for the entire rainy season and Ram Dev Babu's entire family turned Guruji's disciples. This place was converted to a Dharamshala commemorating Guruji's stay and was visited by innumerable devout souls who turned Guruji's disciples.

Years after, this place was visited by the ninth Sikh Guru – Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji who stayed here for few days. The local inhabitants were glad to their superlative degrees

to have a glance of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji in His ninth birth. At the moment, there is a Gurdwara connoting the visit of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji which is entitled as Gurdwara Shri Prayag Sahib, Sarabari. There are some Shastar of Nauwey Patshah, a pot used by Satguru Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and the room where Nauwey Patshah stayed has taken the shape of Sukhasan Room which can still be observed persisting in this Gurdwara Sahib.

From Malda, Guruji ensued towards Kenduli which connotes to the birthplace of Bhagat Jai Dev and is located in Birbhum district. Guruji when reached this place, Jai Dev's Bani was uttered with great reverence by the local populace. The words of Jai Dev Ji touched Guruji intensely and the evidence of this significance can still be noticed in Satguru Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji where exists Bhagat Jai Dev Ji's Bani. Guruji stayed in this place for few days and almost all the inhabitants got enthusiastic for Guru Sahib.

At present, just 4 kms prior to Bhagat Jai Dev Ji's place of birth, there is a Gurdwara commemorating to Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's visit to this place. This newly constructed Gurdwara is under the supervision of Baba Sukha Singh Ji (Kar Sewa Wale) and is entitled as Gurdwara Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Sahib.

From Kenduli, Guruji ensued towards Bardhaman located between Ajay River and Hooghly River. Guruji rested for some time in this region and freed the people imbibed in superstitions. Guruji's Shabads had subterranean influence on the people and the news of Guruji's influx spread far and wide. Here, Guruji rested adjacent to Gar Gara Ghat and for some time. The king when got to know about Guruji rushed to meet Him as the king was a Khatri from Punjab. The king paid great reverence to Guru Sahib, sought His blessings and led a life according to His morals, thus transforming himself into a Nanak Naam Leva Sikh.

In Bardhaman, there was a Guru Ghar established since 1510 situated on Gar Gara Ghat presently known as Grand Trunk Road. This Guru Ghar has taken the shape of a magnificent Gurdwara Sahib connoting to the visit of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji to this place. The Gurdwara Sahib is entitled as Gurdwara Sri Guru Nanak Charan Kamal Sahib. From Bardhaman, Guruji ensued towards Katwa. Here persists a Gurdwara entitled "Sri Guru Nanak Gurdwara Katwa". The present caretaker of this Guru Ghar, Sardar Ranjit Singh says,

"When Satguru Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj reached this province, there was outburst of Cholera and people were robustly dying. Sache Patshah Ji sat under a magnificent tree which is still persisting and started singing Shabad. Guru Maharaj healed this entire province from the deadly epidemic and vast numbers of Nanak Naam Leva Sangat was established here.

Post to Guru Sahib, it was Nauwey Patshah Ji who visited this province during the outbreak of deadly Small Pox. Guruji used the water of a well which was persisting since the time of Guru Nanak Sahib Ji and cured the masses. The well has now been filled with mud and a large area of land has been encroached by the locals."

As one glances at the Gurdwara Sahib, he / she can notice at the exterior entrance, it has been mentioned as Sri Guru Nanak Gurdwara Katwa 1966" but in the interior, it has been mentioned as Sri Guru Nanak Gurdwara Katwa 1946". The cause of citing both the years relies on the fact that in the year 1946, the Gurdwara was constructed but was deficient with a boundary

which was constructed in the year 1966.

Traversing from Katwa, Guruji ensued towards Bishnupur where He stayed here for few days, met local people and progressed towards Medinipur where He halted in Chandrakona. This place was named as Mana during Guruji's visit. Guruji's arrival was synonymous to a great solace to the king of this region. Raja Chandra Ketu of Ketu Dynasty was ruling this province when Guruji visited this place. The king when got to know of Guruji's arrival, went to Guruji to seek His blessings. Guruji was sitting under a banyan tree when the king visited Him and thus the following conversation commenced,

The King – Guruji, being the king of this region, I am childless. I have no heir to the throne. Please bless me with a child Master.

Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji – O the great king! Pray to Waheguru. Chant His name. True Lord will certainly bless you.

The king obeyed Guruji's order and a child was born to him. To king's surprise, the child was a girl. The king was bent with grief and again went to Guruji & thus the following conversation commenced –

The King – Guruji, I am blessed with a child but she is a girl. How can I make her an heir to the throne?

Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji – O king! It's Lord's command (Huqum) that a girl child is born to you. With His blessings, this girl will rule your kingdom like a warrior prince.

With Guruji's blessings, the princess was brought up as a prince and was considered as an heir to king's throne. Guruji instructed Raja Chandra Ketu to get a Dharamshala constructed where there should be recitation of Mool Mantar twice a day and not only saints but also the locals shall be fed free. A Gurdwara was established under the banyan tree where the king offered his prayers to Guruji entitled as Gurdwara Sri Guru Nanaksar, Chandrakona.

Gyani Satnam Singh Ji, the Head Granthi of Gurdwara conveyed the beneath penned statements to me,

“Abinash Ji, I would love to share few concealed facts of this Gurdwara Sahib. After Guru Nanak Patshah, this place was looked after by the Nanak Panthis who were originated from Punjab. The most devout Nanak Panthi serving at this place was Baba Baisakhi Daas whose tomb is still prevalent in the Gurdwara Premises. He would sit here in front of the Banyan Tree and would peep into the Darbar Hall to have a glimpse of Guru Granth Sahib Ji.

The place where Guruji used to sit is still existing in the form of a small Manji and the magnificent Gurdwara besides this Manji was constructed later on. The Seva of this Gurdwara was under the control of Udasi Mahant and finally in 1962, it was Baba Saran Daas who handed over the shrine to the Sikh Sangat. The memories of these Nanak Panthis are still prevalent and you can clearly eye them”.

From Midnapur, Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji proceeded towards Kontai following the banks of Rasulpur river. Kontai is the final destination of Guru Sahib in West Bengal from

where He proceeded towards Odisha en routing through Rupsa, Jaleswar, Balasore, Jamjhadi, Bhadrak, Jajpur & Cuttack finally reached Puri. While, Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji proceeded through Bardhaman, Bishnupur, Midnapur and reached Kontai from where He proceeded towards Odisha taking the way through Mayurbhanj, Balasore, Jamjhadi, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Cuttack and finally reached Puri. The details of all these facts have been furnished in my written book “The Sikh History of Odisha”.

Post to these events, it was in the tenure of Maharaja Ranjit Singh Ji that the state of West Bengal gave rise to an eminent saint of India entitled Shri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. Though a disciple of Parivrijaka (Wandering) saint – Totapuri a staunch follower of Advait Vedanta and a worshipper of Goddess Kali, the saint was intensely influenced by the principles of Sikh Gurus. Amassing the evidential records pertaining to the connection of this saint with the Sikh Religion, I reached Belur Matth in the year 2017 stationed in Kolkata and consulted one of the Yogi of this Matth.

When he acknowledged my identity as a Sikh Historian, he was extremely overwhelmed and bestowed great reverence. I was gratified to my Master for each and every jiffy spent in the Matth as the love and respect bestowed on me was only because of Him who has preferred this servant to work for His Khalsa Panth. The hilarious part of our conversation was the disremembering mind of the Yogi who used to fail to recall my name. Sometimes he used to address me in the name of Abhishek, sometimes Avnish and finally, he started addressing me as Abi Dada. Subsequent to few split seconds, the Yogi spoke,

“Abi Dada, you are precise in saying that Swami Ramakrishna Paramahansa was a great admirer of Sikh Dharma. He used to read few scripts from Guru Grantha Sahib and has also translated the Japuji Sahib of Nanak Dev into Bengali. He used to provide lot number of examples from the life stories of Sikh Gurus.

The same is also with his succeeding disciple (Uttaradhikari) – Noren to whom the whole world acknowledges as Swami Vivekananda. In almost all of his discourses, he would speak of the Sikh Gurus, their theologies and their principles. Even I am showing you the books which clearly and evidentially states these facts”.

He showed me two books authored by Swami Vivekananda entitled – Viveka Vani (Quotes of Swami Vivekananda) and The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda in which he has inscribed aptly about the Sikh Religion and the Sikh Gurus and also in some of the letters penned by him to various personalities starts with a Fateh –

**Waheguru Ji ka Khalsa
Waheguru Ji ki Fateh**

It is even remarkable that in the Bhakti – Yoga class of New York on 20th January, 1896 Swami Vivekananda’s all-inclusive homily was centered to the Sikh Religion and the Sikh Gurus. In addition to the above-mentioned literatures, there is a Bengali paperback named Swami Sisya Sambad penned by Sarat Chandra Chakraborty and published by Swami Atmabodhananda of the Utbodhan Karyalaya, Kolkata in which a chapter is relevant to Shri Kali Charan Banerjee – a disciple of Swami Vivekananda who has given a vivid description of an incidence which was reminiscent to beneath penned lines,

“Strolling with his disciples on the roof of Late Balram Basu’s residence in Kolkata around the year 1882, Swami Vivekananda recalled the life and message of the tenth Sikh Guru – Guru Gobind Singh”.

Anyone inscribing or researching on the Sikh History of this state can never ignore the significance of Agraghari Sikhs prevailing in this state. Conferring to the antique Historical Records, it can be scrutinized that the designation of Agraghari descends from the connotation of this sect with the cities of Agra and Agroha. A concoction of Indian and Nepali Vaishya community, they are most likely to be the progenies of Raja Agrasen.

A legendary personality and a great social reformer born around 5,000 years back, the world nevertheless celebrates his born day as Agrasen Jayanti. Mythological Legends prevail that Raja Agrasen was blessed by Goddess Lakshmi for trade and commerce. Hence, his progenies are dispersed in various Indian states namely Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Bihar and Jharkhand.

Since after the visit of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji’s visit, alliance/interrelation of East India with North India grew profound. Pertaining to East India, the Agraghari sect stepped into the state of Bihar with the Khatri of Punjab around some 500 years back. The alliance/interrelation of the Agraghari with the Khatri can be traced to the cause pertaining to the growth of trade.

The addition of title Sikh to Agraghari emerges when the 9th Sikh Guru Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji visited the province of Sasaram in the state of Bihar. I have given a comprehensive account of Sikh History pertaining to the state of Bihar in Sikh History of Bihar. At that epoch, the Khatri from Punjab were renowned class businessman. The instance they got to know of Guruji’s arrival, in order to maintain their supremacy, the Khatri sent Agraghari to receive Guruji.

These devout Agraghari were enforced by the tortures of Mughal to get accept Islam to which they refused and accepted the Sikhi under the guidance of the 9th Sikh Guru Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji. Hence, on a comprehensive analysis, it can be proclaimed that it is Sasaram in the state of Bihar which has given rise to the Agraghari Sikhs. Pertaining to the state of West Bengal, I analyzed from the antique records that the Agraghari Sikhs landed into the province of Kolkata from Bihar along the Ganges with the help of a boat.

The Agraghari Sikhs were the first to build a Gurdwara in Kolkata and propagate the Sikh Codes and Principles even before the Punjabi Sikhs. The Gurdwara Sahib entitled Gurdwara Bara Sikh Sangat (Historical Gurdwara) and Gurdwara Chota Sikh Sangat (Historical Gurdwara) at plot no. 72 and 73 of Cross Street facing Mahatma Gandhi Road are the results of the relentless efforts of these Agraghari Sikhs. The Agraghari Sikhs not only had control over these two Gurdwara, they even had control over Takhat Shri Harimandar Ji Patna Sahib, stationed in the state of Bihar.

At present, Gurdwara Chota Sikh Sangat has become the headquarters of Agraghari Sikhs in the state of West Bengal. Gurdwara Chota Sikh Sangat commemorates the place visited by 9th Sikh Guru Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji. This Gurdwara is fortunate to have one of the Puratan Painting and Shastar of Dashmesh Pita Sahib Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj. It is

also noteworthy that the Historical Gurdwara – Chota Sikh Sangat had the Prakash of a Puratan Bir of Sri Dasam Granth Sahib which no longer exists due to the Anti Panthic forces who are Anti Dasam Granth. The readers must keep in notion that the entire Sri Dasam Granth Sahib is written by Sahib Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj and those opposing it can never be termed as Khalsa. They should be termed as Panthic Traitors.

Few distances apart persisted a Gurdwara entitled “Gurdwara Guru ka Bagh” which was constructed by the Sikhs persisting during the visit of Satguru Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Ji. Raja Hazuri Singh Bail Khatri is believed to have met Guruji in this place. This Gurdwara also had a Sarovar (Amrit Kund) during that era. For years, this place had been a center for propagation of Sikh Religion and its theologies. Largely ignored, the Gurdwara got demolished and currently, only the Sarovar is existing in the premises.

Soon after the establishments of these two Gurdwara, some prominent Agraghari Sikhs of Kolkata namely Tara Singh, Munni Lal Singh (a Gurdwara exists in his memory), Hari Narayan Singh and Panchanan Singh who emerged as successful eminent business personals who also had trade relationships with some British Overseas companies. This phase was revolutionary in the fortune of Agraghari Sikhs and they achieved drastic success in various fields to name a few, automobiles, transport, cotton works and much more.

Currently, some of the Agraghari Sikhs have been successfully established as eminent personalities even in several Governmental Organizations and are leading a life of harmony and peace. According to the Sikh Historical Sources such as Twarikh Guru Khalsa by Giani Gyan Singh, there existed a fort near Alipore which was named by Satguru Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Ji as “Quilla Gobind Garh”. Here in this fort existed Shastar, Handwritten Manuscripts as well as an ancient painting of Guruji.

During the era of British Raj, this fort was demolished replacing the name of “Quilla Gobind Garh” with “Fort William”. The historicity of this place can still be marked by the existing organizations in the name of Guru Sahib.

The Gurdwara Rashbari Sikh Sangat established in 1950 stationed at 41, Mahindra Bagchi Road, Bally, Howrah has a vast obscured Sikh History. I remember, I had visited this place in the year 2018 when I had been to Kolkata for a Katha Vichar which was held in Dum Dum Gurdwara. Soon after the Samapti of my Katha, some gentlemen approached me and shared this wonderful portion of unexplored Sikh History. I could not resist myself from rushing to this spot and gather the information.

The Sikhs namely Sardar Sri Narayan Singh, Sardar Aditya Singh & Sardar Tej Narayan Singh are descendants of those Sikhs who were directly linked to Satguru Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Maharaj and had taken Amrit Kalgidhar Pita Sahib Sri Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj. They revealed an unexplored portion of this Sikh History stating the beneath penned lines,

“Firstly, it was our ancestor named Sardar Binda Singh Ji who had physically met Nauwey Patshah Ji at Patna Sahib. When the Sangat began to depart, Sardar Binda Singh Ji continued to stay and hence, Guru Sahib asked him the cause of his stay. Sardar Binda Singh Ji earnestly prayed Guru Sahib to bless him with a child as they had no descendants. Guru Sahib blessed him and the lineage is still in continuation.”

According to the names mentioned by these Devout Sikhs, a hierarchical depiction of their family lineage has been crafted beneath –

Sardar Binda Singh Ji

Sardar Khanna Singh Ji

Sardar Dhanna Singh Ji

The Generation stops here and Sardar Khanna Singh Ji as well as Sardar Dhanna Singh Ji went to seek blessings of Kalgidhar Patshah Sahib sri Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj for the same as did their father Sardar Binda Singh Ji. Dashmesh Pita instructed them to stop consuming tobacco and blessed them with Khande di Pahul (Amrit). Guru Sahib also warned them by saying the beneath penned lines,

“The moment you get strayed from the Sikh Rehat Maryada; the race of your generation will end therein. Hence, never ever disrespect the Khalsa Panth Maryada”.

Then emerged the great novelist, Asia’s first noble laureate and the inscriber of India’s National Anthem – Rabindranath Tagore. Tagore’s biography is reminiscent of his profound inclination towards Sikh Religion. It puts forward that on the first visit of Tagore to Hari Mandir Sahib (Golden Temple) at Amritsar, the Shabad Kirtan being sung in the Darbar Hall intensely attracted him and in his residence at Kolkata, he would invite Ragi Jatha to perform Shabad Kirtan. Even at one point, being deeply influenced by the Sikh Theologies he led a life without getting his beards and hairs trimmed.

Once the veteran actor Balraj Sahni queried the late Nobel Laureate Rabindra Nath Tagore,

“You have written the national anthem for India. Can you write an international anthem for the whole world”?

Tagore replied –

“It has already been written, not only internationally but for the entire universe, in the 16th century by Guru Nanak in the form of Sikh Aarti”.

Tagore was so enamored of the Aarti uttered by Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj that he personally translated it in consort with two other Shabad namely Badoi Badoi ramya Bina Badoi and E Hari sundar E Hari sundar into Bengali. In addition to these translations, Tagore has penned a book named “Katha” in Bengali in which he has penned five poems on Sikh Religion namely,

- ❖ **Bandi Bīr (Poem on Baba Banda Singh Bahadur Ji)**
- ❖ **Bīr Guru (Poem on Dashmesh Pita Satguru Dhan Dhan Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj)**
- ❖ **Fruitless Gift (Poem on Dashmesh Pita Satguru Dhan Dhan Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj)**
- ❖ **Sesh Saptak (Poem on the son of Baba Banda Singh Bahadur Ji)**

❖ **Prarthanatita Daan (Poem on Bhai Taru Singh Ji)**

Moreover, Tagore has also penned three essays on Sikh religion namely,

❖ **Bir Guru (Pertaining to Dashmesh Pita Satguru Dhan Dhan Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj)**

❖ **Sikh Independence (Pertaining to the wars and ideals of Dashmesh Pita Satguru Dhan Dhan Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj)**

❖ **Who is a Worthy Person? (Pertaining to Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj)**

Even though some claim him to be a scholar in Sikh Theologies, it is too hard for me to accept this proclamation being a Sikh Historian. Hereby, I pen the basis of my contempt to the Tagore's Legends on Sikh Literatures in the custom of poems and essays and his statements besides his intense inclination for the Sikh Religion and his way of living through the beneath penned estimations –

1. Being a Sikh Historian, I am a seeker of Truth and reverence to my Sikh Religion and its Gurus stances foremost for me.
2. It's not only my opinion, I reverentially urge the readers of this book to endure the literatures of Tagore pertaining to the Sikh Religion and make out if I am wrong in any aspect. The original book "Katha" in Bengali language and also its translation in which Tagore has penned on Sikh religion is easily and freely available on the internet.
3. First and foremost, in the inscriptions of Tagore pertaining to Sikh Religion, he has not used any respectful title to which we term in Gurmukhi as Satkaar Upyog Bhasha for the Sikh Gurus. He has directly inscribed their names as if he is addressing to one of his friends in his literatures.
4. Secondly, he has provided a distorting Sikh History which is completely absurd and should not be propagated.
5. Thirdly, in an ancient Bengali Novel entitled "Sikh Guru o Sikh Jaati" by Sarat Chandra Ray, Tagore has penned a preface pertaining to Maratha and Sikh Empire in which he has completely demolished the significance of Sikh religion through his pen.

Hence, those propagating the false acclamations of Tagore being a great admirer of Sikh religion must curb this propaganda. Else, the history and connotation of Sikh Religion will be in carcasses at the most primitive.

Post to the establishments of the Sikh Shrines and Significant Dharam Prachar in West Bengal, the influence of Sikh Religion got profound among the local inhabitants to such an extent that innumerable eminent Bengali Authors began to propagate the Sikh Religion in every corner of the State to share the mission of Love and Humanity as preached by our Sikh Gurus. From which I could excavate only 42 of them who had great role in propagating the Sikh Religion. The names of the authors have been highlighted in red color with the name of their books enclosed in double quotes.

1. The author Ram Mohan Roy in his book Ram Mohan Rachnavali (1973) referred to the universal message of Satguru Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj.
2. The author Devendra Nath Tagore in his book “Aatma Jibani” has penned the profound significance of Japji Sahib.
3. The author Akshaya Kumar Dutta has made immense contributions on the Sikh History and Theologies which were published in the magazine of Brahmo Samaj entitled Tatwa Bodhini Patrika.
4. The author Keshav Chandra Sen who was a leader of the Naba Vidhana Association (Brahmo Samaj) was the first to translate Sri Nanak Parkash Granth into Bengali language and authored the book Sangat (1916) in which he has portrayed his immense respect towards the Sikh Religion.
5. The author Mitra was the first to translate Janam Sakhi Bhai Bala into Bengali which is considered as an outstanding source in Bengali Literature.
6. The author Rajani Kanta Gupta authored the books “The Sikh” and “Bir Mahima” based on the Sikh Historical contexts.
7. The author Jynana Sen authored the book “The Life & Times of Maharaja Ranjit Singh” in the year 1979.
8. The author Baroda Kanta Mishra authored the books “Sikh Judheyer Itihaas O Maharaja Duleep Singh” in Bengali Language. He also had enormous contribution towards the writing and compilation of **The Encyclopedia of Sikhism**.
9. The author Bankim Chandra Chatterjee authored the book “Bharat Kalanka” in Bengali Language where he has given many references pertaining to the Sikh History and translated the biographies of Sikh Gurus in Bengali which were published in the magazine of Banga Darshan.
10. The author Ramesh Chandra Dutta authored the book “Bankim Rachnavali” in Bengali Language where he has portrayed the reverence which Bankim Chandra Chatterjee possessed towards the Sikh Religion.
11. The author Mahindra Nath Bose translated the Sri Nanak Prakash Granth into Bengali Language which was published in the year 1883 and is considered to be one of the best Bengali Translations ever.
12. The author Raja Rajendra Lal Mitra authored several articles in Bengali Language pertaining to the Sikh History and got them published in the magazine Vividhartha Samagraha which was the India’s first penny magazine.
13. The author Krushna Chandra Chakraborty authored the book “Nanak” in Bengali Language.
14. The author Raakhal Das Kavya Nanda authored the book “Guru Nanak” in Bengali Language.
15. The author Debendra Nath Mitra authored the book “Sikh Parichaya” in Bengali

Language.

16. The author Kumudini Mitra authored the book “Sikher Balidan” in Bengali Language.
17. The author Binaya Kumar Sarkar authored the books “Itihaas re Sikh Jaati” & “Sikh Itihaasik Parbandha” in Bengali language published in the year 1914.
18. The author Tinkari Banerjee authored the book “Guru Gobinda Singha” in Bengali Language published in the year 1918.
19. The author Moti Lal Roy authored the book “Yoga Guru” in Bengali Language where he has greatly revered the Sikh Gurus and Sikh History.
20. The author Swami Ranganatha Nanda who belongs to the lineage of Swami Rama Krishna Mission authored the book “Swami Vivekananda on Guru Gobind Singh” in English Language published in the year 1985.
21. The author Kartik Chandra Mitra authored the book “Sikh Guru” in Bengali Language.
22. The author Suniti Kumar Chatterjee authored the book “Guru Gobinda Singha” in Bengali Language published in the year 1967.
23. The author Hara Nath Bose authored the book “Guru Gobinda” in Bengali Language.
24. The author Jatindra Nath Samaddar authored the book “Sikher Katha” in Bengali Language.
25. The author Basanta Kumar Banerjee authored the book “Guru Gobinda Singha” in Bengali Language.
26. The author Yogendra Nath Gupta authored the books “Guru Gobinda Singha” & “Ranjit Singha” in Bengali Language.
27. The author Sarat Kumar Roy authored the books “Sikh Guru O Sikh Jaati” & “Amritsar re Guru Darbar” in Bengali Language.
28. The author Indu Bhushan Banerjee authored the book “The Evolution of Khalsa” in English Language published in the year 1962.
29. The author R.C. Majumdar authored the book “Rabindranath Tagore & Guru Gobind Singh” in English Language published in the 1967 edition of Sikh Review Magazine.
30. The author Mahindra Nath Gupta authored the book “Punjab Keshari Ranjit Singha” in Bengali Language.
31. The author Sashi Bhushan Mukherji translated “Sri Japji Sahib” of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj into Bengali Language and got it printed in Naba Jiban Patrika.
32. The author Abinash Chandra Majumdar authored the book “Guru Nanak Krito Japji Sahib” in Bengali Language published in the year 1918.
33. The author Bijaya Krushna Goswami authored the book “Guru Nanak” in Bengali Language published in the year 1985.

34. The author Jatindra Mohan Chatterjee authored the books “Japji Athaba Naanaka Gita” & “Guru Nanak Gatha” in Bengali Language.
35. The author R.K. Daas Gupta authored the book “Bangla Japji” in Bengali Language published in the year 1954.
36. The author Amar Chandra Chakraborty authored the book “Japji” in Bengali Language which was later published by Gurdwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha, Siliguri edited by Haren Ghosh.
37. The author Haren Chandra Chakladar authored the book “Sri Guru Grantha Sahib Ji Gauri Sukhmani Sahib” in Bengali Language.
38. The author Durga Das Lahiri authored the book “Sikh Itihaas” in Bengali Language.
39. The author Ramesh Chandra Dutta authored the book “Swarna Mandira” in Bengali Language.
40. The author Basanta Kumar Banerjee authored the book “Taru Singha” in Bengali Language.
41. The author Dinesh Kumar Barman authored the book “Sikher Aatma Aahuti” in Bengali Language.
42. The author Anil Chandra Banerjee authored the following 5 books in English Language –
 - I. Anglo Sikh Relation (1946)
 - II. Guru Nanak and His Times (1971)
 - III. Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh (1978)
 - IV. Sikh Guru & Sikh Religion (1983)
 - V. The Khalsa Raj (1985)

Apart from the aspect of Religious Connection with the Sikhs, this state also holds profound connection in the aspects of attaining independence as well as political affairs. The Ghadar Party – an Indian revolutionary organization formed by the people of Punjab in 1913 that had Sikhs, Muslims as well as Hindu leaders – based in the US had active participation of people from Bengal – freedom fighters and intellectuals like Rashbehari Bose, Sachindernath Sanyal, to name a few.

Then, the Komagata Maru massacre is another link of the Sikhs with the state. In the South 24 Paragana district, finds solace a very curious and bijou town named Budge Budge where innumerable Sikhs are persisting. Legend prevails that Baba Gurditt Singh, a Gur Sikh from Amritsar chartered a Japanese Ship labelled as Komagata Maru later renamed as Guru Nanak Jahaz in the year 1914 to sail to Canada where the Govt. had imposed strict restrictions on the entry of the Indians. Predominately, there were Sikhs who were 351 in number and Punjabi Muslims who were 21 in number thus, corresponding to a total number of 372 passengers on the ship of Komagata Maru.

It was 22nd of May, 1914 when the ship reached Vancouver and the passengers were attacked by the police. All of a sudden, the scenario started to reflect “The Third Laws of Newton” stating the concept of opposite reaction. This repulsive action by the passengers was published in the major headlines of all the newspapers which were being propagated across the whole of Canada. This great stir led to an agreement which proclaimed that the Canadian Govt. would provide all the necessities and the ship was voyaged towards China.

Again, with the commencement of war, the ship had to forcibly head towards India. The Komagata Maru reached Kolkata around 26th of September, 1914 and the passengers were held as prisoners. Upon enquired by Baba Gurditt Singh, an official informed that there were preparations ongoing for the sending of passengers through a special train that will land at Nankana Sahib. Though the passengers had a Saroop of Satguru Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Maharaj, they didn’t want to return, instead wished to have the Prakash of Guru Maharaj in a Gurdwara stationed at Kolkata.

It was the morning of 29th September, 1914 when the clock had sharply struck at 11 and the ship Nanak Jahaz reached the town of Budge Budge where the officials insist the additional police forces to compel the passengers to disembark the ship. Baba Gurditt Singh Ji refused and hence, a riot commenced from which 20 attained martyrdom, 1 drowned, 9 hospitalized, 202 jailed, 28 remained unaccounted and 62 flee to Punjab including Baba Gurditt Singh.

A few years surpassed and Baba Gurditt Singh Ji joined Mahatma Gandhi in the campaign of attaining independence. Enormously urged by Mahatma Gandhi, Baba Gurditt Singh Ji returned to Kolkata and surrendered himself to the police thus attaining imprisonment for several years. After release, Baba Gurditt Singh permanently settled in Kolkata and did enormous Sikh Dharam Parchar. Baba Gurditt Singh turned out to be one of the most eminent personalities in the whole of the state of West Bengal where he breathed his last in the year of 1954. Apart from this, the Sikhs were also seen active in the political landscape of West Bengal till attaining the Independence in the year 1947. The taxi drivers and migrant workers were part of the Leftist Nau Jawan Bharat Sabha (NJBS) and Trade Union Organizations (TUO) while some Sikhs were a part of the Akali Movement.

Genda Singh, an organizer of the Communist Workers’ Transport Union, was jailed in 1934 for a year of rigorous imprisonment. While the Sikhs are mostly known for being “defenders” of Hindus during the Great Calcutta Killings of 1946, their role in protecting Muslims remains largely unknown. The Gurudwara persisting at Rashbehari Avenue entitled “Gurdwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha” had one floor where Muslims were offered shelter and another floor allotted to Hindus, during the riots. This Gurdwara is the principle Gurdwara for the Sikhs residing in Kolkata and legend prevails that this Gurdwara was the only source of refuge for the freedom fighters and was one of the centres of learning which propagated the glorious Sikh History as well as the events ongoing in the world and their connecting link with the Gurmat Philosophy. It was a turbulent time for the Sikhs in 1984 all over the country. The Anti-Sikh riots was a blow to the secular fabric of the nation.

West Bengal in fact, was the safest place for the Sikhs. Shri Jyoti Basu, the Chief Minister of the state during 1984 ordered the state administration to be tough in handling hate mongers and there were 10 deaths reported in the state where hundreds died in other states. It is also

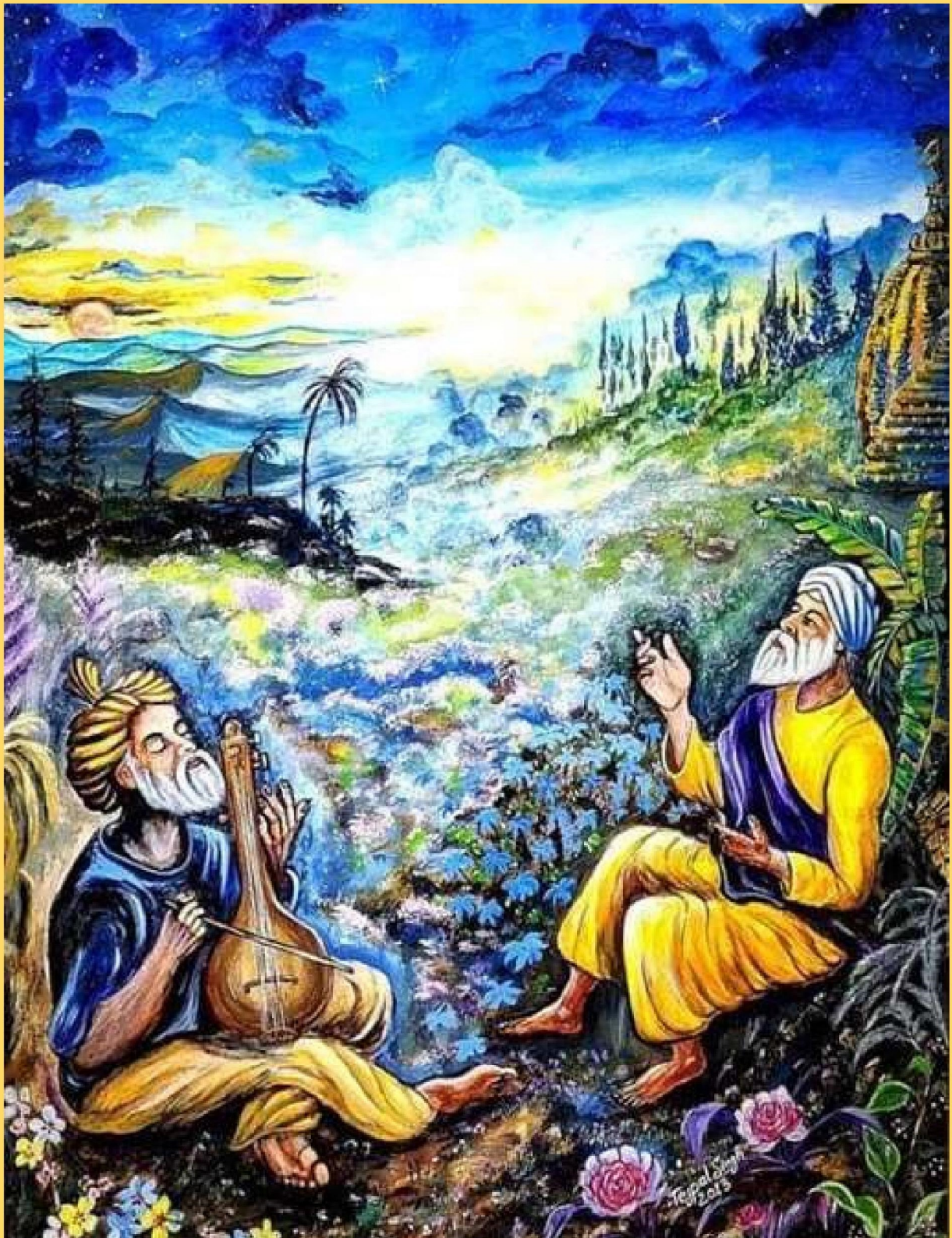
a notable fact that when the Babri Masjid riots took place in 1992, there were only Sikhs to come forward and conduct Langar in the riot affected areas of Topsia and Garden Reach.

The readers of this manuscript will also be astonished to acknowledge that some of the relatives of the former Prime Minister – Sardar Manmohan Singh are still residing in the Behala area. The commencement of Sikh review Magazine by Captain Bhag Singh was another milestone in establishing the Khalsa Raaj and Sikh Dharam Parchar not only constraining to the specific state but also to all the parts of the globe with it headquarter stationed at Kolkata, West Bengal. All the facts are suggestive of a conclusion that at present, the Sikhs have formed an integral portion of the state thus, being the epitome of love, peace and harmony.



CHAPTER - V

The Sikh History of Odisha



An Artistic Depiction of Satguru Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj uttering Aarti
At Jagannath Temple Premises and Bhai Mardana Ji playing the Rabab.

NAVEEN PATNAIK
CHIEF MINISTER, ODISHA



STATE SECRETARIAT
BHUBANESWAR

“The Sikh History of Odisha” authored by Shri Abinash Mohapatra, a young man from Balasore, is indeed a very good attempt to bring to light the places associated with the visit of Guru Nanak Dev Ji in Odisha.

Sikhism preaches brotherhood, sacrifice and fight against injustice and social evils. It also enunciates human values and universal love.

This book nicely depicts the strong bond of Jagannath Cult and Sikhism. I appreciate the hard work of Shri Mohapatra and wish him all the success.



(NAVEEN PATNAIK)

Prof. Ganeshi Lal

Governor, Odisha

ପ୍ରଫେସର ଗଣେଶୀ ଲାଲ

ରାଜ୍ୟପାଳ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା



RAJ BHAVAN
BHUBANESWAR - 751 008

ରାଜଭବନ

ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର-୭୫୧ ୦୦୮

August 20, 2019

APPRECIATION

India known as the land of Spirituality and philosophy, was the birthplace of number of Religions which even exist today in the world. Sikhism was one of them having been established in the 15th century. History and Doctrine of Sikhism has always evoked great sense of glory and interest for the enthusiasts of all ages. Odisha finds special mention in the rise and growth of Sikhism. The footprints of that glorious period that included the visits of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the founder of Sikhism to this Holy Land still survives to narrate and tell many exciting facts. Documenting and producing it in the form of a book entitles "The Sikh History of Odisha" by Balasore based young scholar Mr. Abinash Mohapatra deserves appreciation for the time and energy he has put in. It is good to find that Mr. Mohapatra has done a good number of researches on the other parts of the country. I am sure he would continue with his passion and love to bring before readers many interesting developments in the country whether it is History or Religion.

I wish Mr. Mohapatra all the very best.

Ganeshi Lal
(Ganeshi Lal)

SHRI JYOTI PRAKASH PANIGRAHI

MINISTER OF STATE (IND. CHARGE)
Tourism, Odia Language, Literature &
Culture, Odisha



Phone { Office : (0674) 2530650
EPABX : 232-2197

D. O. No. /MOSTOLLC.

BHUBANESWAR

Date 15-07-2020

I am extremely glad to know that Shri Abinash Mohapatra, a youth of Balasore district of our State is going to publish his books pertaining to the Sikh History of India and other countries visited by Guru Nanak Dev Ji.

Sikhism is based on the spiritual teachings of Guru Nanak, the first Guru, and the nine Sikh Gurus those succeeded him. Guru Nanak taught that living an "active, creative, and practical life" of "truthfulness, fidelity, self-control and purity" is above the metaphysical truth, and that the ideal man is one who "establishes union with God, knows His Will, and carries out that Will".

I appreciate the hard work of Shri Mohapatra and wish him all success in his future endeavour.

(Jyoti Prakash Panigrahi)



Sanghamitra Satpathy, OAS – A (S)
Joint Director – Odia Language, Literature & Culture
Ex – Officio, Joint Secretary to the Govt.
Superintendent of Archaeology,
Govt. of Odisha.

As I remember, two years back, a young man of age 20 rang me up from Balasore who was found to have written numerous books on Sikh History and Philosophy. Apart from the conversation, I got to know about his first book entitled "The Sikh History of Odisha" comprising the entire Udasi of 1st Sikh Guru – Guru Nanak Dev Ji, 9th Sikh Guru – Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji and Maharaja Ranjit Singh to Odisha.

When I enquired of his name, I got to know it was Abinash Mahapatra, the same person who is a born Non Sikh but is doing enormous Seva for the Panth. His deep attachment to SIKHISM is unimaginable and can be regarded as a blessing. This book entitled " The Sikh History of Odisha " is a well-researched book by Mr. Abinash which has been verified of its authenticity and has been prefaced by our esteemed Chief Minister – Shri Naveen Patnaik Ji.

Turning out the pages of the book, I was feeling sanctified and experienced the real essence of blessings. It was perfectly authored by the young man who has taken innumerable efforts in bringing out the Sikh History of Odisha. Besides, Abinash has also added the Baanis recited by both the Sikh Gurus which is itself a knowledgeable fact for the readers to determine in which place were the Baanis composed.

Abinash also holds numerous books by eminent authors, ancient paintings, photographs and handwritten manuscripts pertaining to Sikh History in his residence. Apart from his journey with Sikhism, Abinash holds excellence in education, music, science, literature, philanthropy and debating. I highly appreciate this work and recommend this book to be a must read.

Sanghamitra Satpathy



**ODISHA SKILL
DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

Rashmita Panda, I.A.S.

Director of Employment cum CEO, OSDA

Guru Nanak Dev Ji took 4 Udasis or 4 Mystical Expeditions to each and every part of the globe to dispel the mankind from gloom, to relieve from fallacies and direct them towards morality by captivating them in the path of True Lord. He contributed 24 years of His lifespan for the Spiritual Journeys. Each of the places He visited, the devout heads He encountered and in petite to say His entire life is an ethic for the mankind. An antique Sikh Historian/ Author - Bhai Gurdas Ji notably pens in his poem that –

“Baba Nanak enlightened all the four directions and nine divisions of the Earth
Guru Nanak has emerged in this Kalyug, the dark age.”

The book entitled “The Sikh History of Odisha” by Abinash Mahapatra one of my youngest cousin of 20 belonging to Balasore district accents on the significant voyage of Guru Nanak Dev Ji to the state of Odisha. History only voices that Guru Nanak Dev Ji emanated from West Bengal to Odisha and delivered the Holy Sikh Aarti in Jagannath Puri. The respite fragments of the Sikh History were in a concealed state which can be best studied in this book. This book gives complete account of the Sikh History of Odisha. According to the foreword notes and the appreciations received for this book, I can shortly say that this is the first ever book by Abinash penned on the Sikh History of Odisha.

In this tender age and a being graduate in Zoology Honours, he has given a wonderful portrait of Sikh History pertaining to Odisha. Being a student of History, I appreciate this work of Abinash and wish him all the success for his future.

May God Bless You Ever

Rpanda
Rashmita Panda



RAJA JAYANT CHANDRA MARDARAJ HARICHANDAN
39th Raja of the Princely State – Raj Nilgiri

Date – 01/06/2020

The Rulers of the Princely State of Raj Nilgiri pertaining to Bhanj Dynasty have got their endeavours inscribed in Golden Letters in the History of India. Getting itself bounded in the North and West of Mayurbhanj and Balasore in South, this state was founded in the year 1125. Myself Raja Jayant Chandra Mardaraj Harichandan being the 39th Raja of Raj Nilgiri express my earnest privilege to quote about Guru Nanak Dev Ji's visit to our Kingdom especially to our palace.

This fact has been aptly mentioned in an authentic manner in the book "The Sikh History of Odisha" authored by a 22 years old Sikh Historian Abinash Mahapatra which has been prefaced by The Hon. Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik.

I extend my best wishes for Abinash and pray for his bright future ahead.

*With Best Wishes,
Jayant Chandra Mardaraj Harichandan.
01/06/2020.*

An Introduction to The Odisha Sikh History

I have put the pen to paper but the contemplation is not mine. The efforts may seem to be stiff for me but the outgrowth in the figure of this paperback is not mine. I may seem to be the novelist of this tome and the accumulator of statements sequentially generating chapters to widen the facts in aspect and apt but the initiative is not mine.

In favor of inscribing my research work, I may get the title of Author of this book but the credit should not be planted on me. The contemplation, outgrowth, initiatives and plantations of credits are from and should be implanted on The Supreme Formless Lord “Waheguru Ji” who has chosen me who bears the designation of His slave to work on the journeys of the Sikh Gurus.

The state Odisha being my native domicile proclaims a glorious historical and cultural lineage spanning 2000 years. To pen an important fact, I would like to mention that the name Odisha comes from the Sanskrit term **ODRA DESHA** or **ODRA VISHAY** which was a part of Bengal till 1912 and a part of Bihar till 1936.

In the year 1950, it was confined as an independent state incorporated to the union Republic of India and was literally and officially connoted as Orissa which later got transformed to Odisha. Confining to the rich cultural and historical heritages including the famous Kalinga War, Jagannath temple in Puri etc. the land was enough fortunate to kiss the feet of the two Sikh Gurus – Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and Satguru Shri Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji while the state was a part of West Bengal.

Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj took the way to Jagannath Puri, Odisha which was then used to be defined as Jagannath Sadak. Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji entered Odisha through Mayurbhanj and reached Puri. If we churn the pages of History, we discover that Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji voyaged to Odisha from West Bengal. If I go for a complete mapping of the route, disembarking into Odisha, Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji trekked through the following places: -

- ❖ Rupsa
- ❖ Jaleswar
- ❖ Balasore
- ❖ Jamjhadi
- ❖ Bhadrak
- ❖ Jajpur
- ❖ Kendrapada
- ❖ Chhatia
- ❖ Cuttack
- ❖ Bhubaneswar

- ❖ Sakhi Gopal
- ❖ Jagannath Puri
- ❖ Dahinkhia
- ❖ Brahmagiri

The above consigns in Odisha are synonymous to signposts where Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji had stopovers in Odisha. Jagannath Puri was also a foundation stone in the formation of Khalsa Panth by Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji.

The Panja Pyaras are the ones who were ready to offer their heads when Guruji sought five heads. Of the five dedicated souls, Bhai Himmat Rai the third Pyara was from Odisha who later came to be addressed as Bhai Himmat Singh Ji and got martyred for Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji in Chamkaur Battle.

Jagannath Puri was also visited by Maharaja Ranjit Singh. All these facts have been discussed in detail in the succeeding pages of this book. My empathetic thankfulness to Sri Akal Takhat Sahib, Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Govt. of Odisha and various Sikh universities and Dignitaries.

I hope this book will enthrall the readers and fulfill my mission of Sikh Dharam Parchar which was and has been my aim.

The Sikh History of Odisha

Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji entered the domain of Odisha from the present-day state of West Bengal and passing through Rupsa and Jaleswar, osculated the soil of Balasore. In Balasore, Guruji visited the areas of Nilgiri and Biranchipur. When Guruji stepped into Nilgiri in Balasore, He at first visited the shrine of Panchulingeswar (A Famous Temple dedicated to the Hindu Deity – Mahadev), sat in the temple premises and commenced His euphonious Shabad to the tune of Bhai Mardana Ji's Rabab.

The locals assembled near Guruji and were immersed in the mystic ecstasy. Seeing the huge congregation, the priests felt envious and started having Spiritual Debate (Siddh Gosht) with Guruji. The debate continued for hours and in the final point, the priests surrendered. They urged Guruji to step into temple to which Guruji denied and uttered the following lines –

“I don't worship Mahadev or Shiva Lingam. I worship Akal Purakh – the supreme formless Lord who has created Mahadev. He is my only Lord and is the True god of this Universe. From Him we come and into Him we merge”.

From Panchulingeswar Temple, Guruji ensued towards the Nilgiri Jagannath Temple which is just besides the wall of Nilgiri Royal Palace. Guruji sat just in front of the main gate of Jagannath Temple and whispered to Bhai Mardana –

“Mardana! A prodigious play under His (Akal Purakh) command is yet to begin”.

Guruji instructed Bhai Mardana to strike the strings of the Rabab and thus begun His melodious Shabad. Heeding to the Shabad, the priests came running growling towards Guruji like man-eaters and asked Him the cause of singing in the temple premises. The benevolent Master replied calmly –

“I am singing the praises of the Lord who is the creator of this Universe.”

The priests queried to Guruji in anger –

“About whom are you speaking? Who is your Lord? Is he above our Lord – Jagannath to whom we call Lord of the Universe.”

Guruji grinned and retorted to the priests –

“You utter the word Jagannath for a wooden statue to whom you proclaim an embodiment of Vishnu.

I utter the word Jagannath for the Supreme Formless Lord – Waheguru who is the Real Lord of this Universe and is the creator of even Vishnu and all the Gods and Goddesses of this Universe.

For me, He is the real Jagannath not this wooden statue or embodiment of

Vishnu.”

Guruji’s words had profound influence on the mindsets of the priests and they acknowledged His Godliness. They surrendered to Guruji and became His admirers. At this instance the princely son of Nilgiri Raja – Raj Kumar Narayan Singh Bhujang Mandhata Birat Basant Harichandan was present. He turned to be one of the devout disciples of Guruji and informed to his father regarding this. The king was overwhelmed after listening to the incidents and his eagerness knew no bounds to meet The True & Benevolent Master.

The king bowed in front of Guruji and insisted Him to stay in his palace. Guruji agreed but rested in the garden of the king where the locals, the Royal scholars and the priests came to meet Him. Departing from the King’s Royal Palace, Guruji visited the famous Shakti Peeth – Bhudarchandi Temple accompanied by the King where He had Siddh Gosht (Spiritual Debate) with the Chief Priest and showed him the path of worshipping the True Lord.

Biranchipur, a remote village is located in Simulia Tehsil of Balasore district in Odisha. By the era, Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji arrived in this place, the village was scarcely populated. There were forty Odia families residing in the region of which there existed a Sahu family. The news of Guru Sahib’s arrival spread like a wild fire and Mr. Sahu an inhabitant of this region took a steadfast decision stating that –

Unless the Master puts His Divine Footstep at the spot where I am getting my abode constructed, I won’t proceed for any further construction. Let this work be withheld unless He sets His Holy Feet here.

The disciple’s wishes fulfilled and Guru Sahib paid a visit to his construction site. When Guru Sahib departed, this family had the fortune of having the KADA of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji as a symbolic representation of blessing. The blessings of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji in the outline of this KARA remained confined in their residence till 1919. In this particular interlude of 1919, the future cohort grandson of Late Mr. Sahu named Mr. Dinabandhu Sahu (Late) build an Odia Gurdwara in the vicinity of their residence at the same place where Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji was seated.

Heeding to the above-mentioned historical contexts from Mr. Dinabandhu Ji related to this province, I thought my work is done. But what happened next was something which was just out of the blue for me. Dinabandhu Ji queried me –

“Abinash Babu, do u know how to recite Japji Sahib, Anand Sahib, Mool Mantar?”

Heeding to his words I was amazed. It is unanticipated for me to hear such lines from an ethnic aged Odia Man. With a trembling voice, I retorted with great amazement –

Yes, I do know. But Dinabandhu ji, how did you come to know about this? Do you possess knowledge in inscribing Gurmukhi? Can you recite Gurmukhi?

With a grin on face, Mr. Dinabandhu Ji offered me a chair and spoke –

“Neither do I know how to read nor do I know how to recite Gurmukhi. But it has been a tradition from our ancestors to learn and recite these Bani. I also had been to Amritsar to have Darshan of Swarna Mandir. I can clearly recite Mool Mantar and I do always keep reciting it.

I have realized the bitter truth of life and hence I know Maarega toh Nanak Maarega rakhega toh Guru Nanak rakhega.”

My joy knew no bounds when I heard to such words by him. I acknowledged a real Nanak Panthi is residing in the lanes of Biranchipur Village. Even I learnt to discern that few years back, a small sapling from the KARA was sent to Patiala for research and the authenticity of the KARA was proved. Now the Seva in this Gurdwara is cared by Mr. Bhaskar Sahu in absolute Hindu Tradition by a priest. The idols of certain Hindu Deities and Sri Satguru Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Maharaj are worshipped in Hindu Ethnic with rituals, Aarti and other religious rites.

Mrs. Trupti Singh, daughter of Mr. Bhaskar Sahu revealed the History of Nauwey Patshah Satguru Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Maharaj’s visit to this province. She uttered the following lines,

“During the tenure of our great grandfather i.e., in 17th century, the ninth Sikh Guru was passing through Biranchipur towards Jagannath Puri from Kolkata.

My great Grand Father was a leper. Guru Sahib healed him with the Mool Mantar and instructed him to recite it. Since that epoch, we have been reciting this Mool Mantar. Guru Sahib had also blessed our family with His Shastar which have been lost in the due course of time. Also, a Nihang Singh used to do Seva at this place and had brought with him a large iron treasury which is still preserved at our residence.”

The presence of Nihang Singh in this province can be evidentially observed by the presence of Handwritten Granths in which Asa Di Var, Dasam Bani and few other Gurbani are inscribed. Satguru Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj sauntered from Biranchipur and reached a village named Somya. In the village of Somya, under the locality Narshingpur, included in the district of Bhadrak there subsist signatures of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji’s visit. Concealed from the other stopovers, there existed some Hindu families among which only one was Brahmin family with surname Adhikari in this particular regime.

Legend reveals that Guru Sahib along with Bhai Mardana Ji came drifting to this province. He initiated intoning Shabad Kirtan and by heeding to the devotional tune,

the entire village came running to Guru Sahib and sought his sanctuary.

Guru Sahib showed them the approach of a simple and steady life. This cannot be termed as unfortunately; it may be a blessing for the inhabitants of the village that Bhai Mardana Ji left those writings and ensued with Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji towards Bhadrak. Those scattered manuscripts came into the furnishes of a Sanskrit Teacher in that eon. The teacher as could not maintain them donated to that Brahmin Family of Adhikaris. The manuscripts are preserved in their residence.

Long years back, there was a blind Sewaadar in Bhadrak Gurdwara. He approached to this spot with human support and installed Guru Granth Sahib, Panth Prakash, Bhai Bala Janam Sakhi, a chart representing the link of Gurmukhi alphabets and Odia alphabets, a booklet used by the initial Gurmukhi readers, a very old Gutka of some Bani which is still preserved in their residence.

Now the future generations of those Adhikari folks are residing in that region. The manuscripts are placed in their PUJA HOUSE along with Hindu Deities and are worshipped in complete Hindu tradition by the existing family members of the Adhikari folks.

They bestow great reverence for Guruji and when I was in a discussion with Mr. Adhikari, he shared some of his experiences which I am inscribing beneath –

“Abinash Babu, I would like to share few of my personal experiences with you.

Once it so happened that my wife got tremendously ill and was admitted in Apollo Hospitals, Bhubaneswar. She was accompanied by my relatives and I had to be here. After a day or two of her admission, I got a phone call from my daughter who was with her who was weeping ceaselessly. When I asked the cause, she retorted that doctors are finding no clues of curing her and there is very less chance of her survival. I was speechless at that moment. Immediately I rushed to my PUJA ROOM where the POTH of Guru Nanak is kept and prayed earnestly. To everyone’s surprise, I again got a phone call from my daughter, still she was weeping but this weep was out of joy. My joys were boundless when I heard that doctors proclaimed my wife is out of danger and even u can see her sitting beside me completely fit and fine.

On another instance, I was saved from getting burned. Thus, it happened once, someone’s gas cylinder leaked from kitchen and caught fire. As you can see our locality is full of mud houses roofed with straw, the nearby houses too caught fire. Seeing the fire, I ran near the POTH of Guru Nanak to save them from getting burnt but was unable to run out due the fire that was blazing. Our locality seemed to be forest which has been cursed by Nature with Forest Fire. Getting no way out, I hold the POTH tightly and sat closing my eyes chanting Nanak, Nanak, Nanak, Nanak. Few hours later when I moved out, I noticed

houses of the entire locality was transformed into ashes and people were lamenting. When I saw mine abode, it was completely safe and sound. I realized it was none but Guru Nanak who has saved me and His Belongings Himself.”

Heeding to the experiences of Mr. Adhikari, I couldn't stop myself from enfolding him and shed the tears of joy. I felt myself honored to be a servant of such a Master. Ambling from Somya, Guruji followed on towards the district of Bhadrak.

On the banks of River Salandi, stands the temple of Goddess Bhadrakali from which a district derives its name as Bhadrak and imbibes itself with rich cultural heritage and history. Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji travelling from Biranchipur and Somya Village reached Bhadrak and sanctified the aura.

Guruji stayed in a village and named it as Sangat where He held mass prayers for few days. The place where Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji reinvigorated beneath a neem tree belonged to an Odia Gentleman named Mishra. Mr. Mishra turned to an ardent devotee of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and even did his successors.

He started banqueting Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's universal message by travelling far and wide with his white horse and disseminated the KADA Prasad. The Sikh devoted successors of the Odia Gentleman bequeathed the land for the edifice of the Guru Ghar and endorsed the land under the Government records as Guru Granth Sahib. History prevails that a Guru Ghar was constructed in the form of a mud hut and a picture of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji was installed.

Every day, an Odia lady offered KADA Prasad under the photograph and covered it. When the Prasad was uncovered, the form of a small palm used to appear on it. Shri Bansi Ballab Goswami, an eighteenth-century poet of Bhadrak has given indication of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji in his poem Mughal Tamasha which somehow mentions the above- mentioned facts.

A 1930s Odia poet has written a lot on Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and Sangat village in his verses composed in Odia. A piece of trunk of the Neem Tree where Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji used to hold mass prayers is preserved at Takhat Shri Harimandar Ji in Patna Sahib. Besides that, a few manuscripts containing some verses from the famous Japji Sahib of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji were also discovered at Sangat in Bhadrak. A well of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's era still exists in Gurdwara's campus which is suspected to be used by Guru Sahib.

History even prevails Guruji even stayed at Sabar Dutta Matth which is a few expanses away from Gurdwara Guru Nanak Sangat Sahib. This Matth was not only visited by Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji but also it was a resting place for all the saints and travelers who were following the Jagannath Sadak to reach Jagannath Puri. Legend prevails of Guru Sahib's stay in this Matth for few days.

Striding from Bhadrak towards the direction of south, Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji followed the banks of River Baitarani and stepped into Jajpur Town. The chief priest

of Biraja Temple spoke Mythologically, in Garuda Purana, this river has been described as bridge between the earth and infernal Naraka, the realm of Yama, the Hindu God of Death. This river is also believed to purify one's soul and destroy all the sins. Guru Sahib when dipped His Holy Feet in the River, flowers got accumulated at His Holy Feet as if she was offering her devotion at the Sacred Feet of the Master. Guruji epitome the river as Swarga Ganga.

The local people who observed this unusual paradox could realize Guru Sahib's greatness and flocked towards Him. Thereon, Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji sauntered towards Biraja Temple where He had in depth discussions on Spiritualism with the learned and the priests. Guru Sahib's simplest way of devotion and thought process motivated them intensely and they highly praised Guru Sahib. Unfortunately, there is not a single memory left of Guru Sahib's visit in this region.

The Govt. Historical Records is evocative that some devotees approached Guruji and sought His blessings for a fresh water supply which was greatest scarcity in the region. A few steps away from the temple, a water reservoir was dug to provide water to Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and His disciples during His visit.

To dig the reservoir, a total number of 100 workers worked day and night to obey Guruji's command. The dimension of the water reservoir connoted to 20 ft. * 30 ft. in dimensions. Large number of people used the waters from here till few years back. Many consider the water of the well as holy like the water of the River Ganga. There is legend that the residents of the town who used to get water of the well had medicinal value. Incurable diseases have been cured from the Amrit of this reservoir.

It can be termed as the fortune's punishment that the sacred well has been filled with soil and the garbage are dumped on it. Banana plantations are being done to erase the Sikh History of this region. A shop has also been constructed which has covered a few portions of the area where the well of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji exists. All these attributes are clearly depicting an intentional propaganda to erase the Sikh Establishment from this region.

Covering a few walking distance from the well, there is a temple named Indra Akhandaleswara Temple. Legend prevails that Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji visited this temple and held congregation on a stage which was later named Nanak Bedi. Nowadays there is no such stage found. Shops have been constructed by demolishing the stage. Reminiscence too exists that there was an altar (Gadi) of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji near Barahanath Temple in village Barahanath within Jajpur town where Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji sat and held Sangat (Congregation). The altar is said to have stones impended on it which were from Maharashtra. But nowadays there is no altar seen near the temple as it is demolished and roads have been constructed on it.

Many governmental as well as religious pleas were made for the restoration of the places relating to Sikh History but there are no initiatives taken yet. The less population of the Sikhs has also resulted in erasing the history of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji in Jajpur. The local residents seem to know nothing about historically important Sikh

consigns and the visit of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji in this region.

Sauntering from Jajpur, Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji ensued towards Kendrapada and sat along the banks of Baitarani River. There existed a Gadi (Altar of Guruji) where used to sit and sing Shabad. The Revenue Records of Kendrapada District put forward the confirmation of this Altar belonging to Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji which got demolished in the year 1946 by the British Army. Though innumerable developments have been made in the district, even for large population of crocodiles in this river, a crocodile sanctuary has been constructed but there's no measure taken for the restoration of the Altar related to Guruji.

From Kendrapada, Guruji navigated through Sainkula the way which is presently entitled as present day Jajpur Road. Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji rested there for a while in the premises of a Jagannath Temple and reached Chhatia. This place holds a deep reverence in the state of Odisha. To elaborate the History of Guru Sahib's visit, I encrypt the following lines which I had translated from the Temple Historical Records originally penned in Odia and Sanskrit Language which is in the possession of the Temple Authorities: -

“In Chhatia, Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji sat in a meditative pose under this banyan tree and was deeply imbibed in Lord's name with closed eyes in the premises of Chhatia Bata Temple. Hearing about a Saint's arrival, the local king Hari Manima and the priests with local people flocked around Guru Sahib. The King with due respect bowed to Guru Sahib and sought His blessings. There exists an old well which is believed to be thousand years old. Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji used the water of the well and touched it which is still believed to cure incurable diseases. Still the well does exist and is opened only once a day to distribute its water to the visitors.

The King took Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji to his palace and offered a pair of wooden sandals with food in brass utensil (bowl). Sitting in the court of the King at the center, surrounded by saints, Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji declared the land of Chhatia as “Sadhna Peeth”. After a vivid discussion with the saints and king, Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji started to depart. The local Sangat were blessed by Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji when Guru Sahib offered His stick, a Pothi, the sandals and bowl as blessings to them.

After Guru Sahib's departure, the stick, Pothi, Sandals, bowl were all preserved in the palace in a secret room but as the years passed off, the palace got naturally demolished and the articles of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji got scattered. The Chhatia Bata temple authorities who preserved the stone on which Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji sat under Banyan tree and the pulley of the well-used by Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji took over the Pothi of Guru Sahib and kept it under their custody. Few years back, in an inter- clash between the authorities, numerous pothis were burnt which too included the Pothi of Guru Sahib”.

Years after Guru Sahib's visit, in the post-independence periods Sardar Bala Singh along with his family settled in this region and soon the local strength started joining with him. Around 1970s, the deserted Sikh population grew to 350 Sikh Families in that region and with the local support, a Gurdwara was constructed and Sardar Bala Singh took over the charge of Seva and even in the areas around Gurdwara, farming was done and the outcome was distributed in free among the poor and needy people.

But a dark phase of misfortune casted its shadow on the Sikh community of this region when a riot between Muslims and the Sikhs broke out. Several Sikhs were murdered, many fled to other regions and the remaining strength in fear quit Sikhism. After the death of Sardar Bala Singh Ji, the Gurdwara was demolished and Guru Granth Sahib Maharaj was transferred to West Bengal. There is not a single Sikh family left and the Sikh Culture is ruined and erased in this region. Not a single necessary step is taken to conserve the Sikh History in this region.

Cuttack is the former capital and second largest city of Odisha was next destination of Guruji where He stepped into sauntering from Chhatia. This city derives its name from the anglicized Sanskrit word Kataka, which has two meanings- one being military camp and the other is seat of government protected by army. The city is on a peninsula flanked by the Mahanadi River to the north and Kathajodi River to the south. Cruising from Chhatia, Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji reached Cuttack on the banks of Mahanadi River.

Guru Sahib took shelter in a small cottage a few steps away from river. A mesmerist named Chetan Bharti was residing very close to the cottage. He was practicing witchcraft in an intention to mobilize Bhairavi. Guru Nanak's presence attracted the people of that locality and they turned His disciples. Even with time, the numbers increased. Watching the situation, his heart imbibed with jealousy and hatred. Chetan even applied his witchcraft to divert the attention of the people from Guru Nanak. His trials were of no use.

Once Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji was in a deep meditation. At that very moment Chetan Bharti reached there to give him corporal punishment by breaking one of the branches of Sahada tree nearby. When Guruji opened his eyes, the branch fell on the ground and weeping piteously he touched the feet of Guruji with agony. By the influence of the kind advice of Guruji, Chetan turned into the adorer of almighty God and became his disciple. He led a life according to Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's Philosophy.

The geographical edifice of Cuttack city can be described as a bowl which was most frequently flooded by the Mahanadi River. The Sangat went to Guruji and appealed to hail them from this destruction. Once in the early morning Chetan offered one of the branches of the Sahada tree to Guruji to brush his teeth. Guru Nanak used one part of that branch and dug the rest on the ground which grew into a huge tree. After the branch was dug, till date the Cuttack city has not been flooded since the time.

The same tree perished in 1930. Prof Pranakrishna Parija and Prof. Baba Kartar Singh,

the two eminent scientists, examined the tree and declared that the tree was of that period. Another tree took birth from the root of the same tree which is now esteemed by the Sikhs to recall the memory of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji. In order to construct a Gurdwara, Prof. Parija and Prof. Singh collected donation from the Sangat and their dreams became fruitful when the old Gurdwara building took a new shape in this region. Sri Satguru Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji's Prakash was done in 1935. Since there on, this Gurdwara is celebrating various Sikh occasions and is playing a major role in preserving the Sikh History.

Apart from this place, Guruji is said to have visited the areas of Dhabaleswar Mahadev Temple in Cuttack. Here, Guruji had Siddh Gosht with the Shaivite Priest and the priest accepted Guruji as his Spiritual Mentor. The king of Cuttack too came to pay homage to Guruji and donated a part of land for Guruji. History even prevails that Udasis from Punjab visited this site and built a Matth. Here they used to guide people to chant Waheguru and hence the Matth was named Waheguru Matth.

Then emanates the paramount portion of Sikh History connoting to the state of Odisha i.e., visit of Guruji to Jagannath Puri where He recited the Holy Sikh Aarti in the Jagannath Temple premises. Voluminous publications have been prepared by various scholars, authors, researchers and historians connoting to Guruji's visit to Puri and recitation of Sikh Aarti. I may be blunt in my words but it's a real fact that some of these publications are baseless and implant a negative and distorting impact on the Codes and Conducts of Sikh Religion as well as few historians have penned what they have heeded from the locals without making an in-depth analysis on this subject. Distorting the theologies of Sikh History and making it a sect of Hinduism is always a propaganda of the RSS activists and many dirty politics have been played in the name of Guru Sahib's Visit to Jagannath Puri. Innumerable people may provide infinite lame excuses but the bitter truth is its only veracity that prevails.

The exact and authentic record of Guruji's visit to Puri is inscribed in the Daily Dairy of Jagannath Temple which is termed as Madala Panji. To the surprise of the readers, this diary is being maintained since the construction of Jagannath Temple and hold the signature of Guruji. The Daily Record (Madala Panji) is penned in Odia and hence am penning the translated version of it in the succeeding lines which I had done while accessing this manuscript in the Temple –

Satguru Shri Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj descended on the Divine Vedic Land of Jagannath Puri in 15th Century crossing through Bhubaneswar and Sakhi Gopal and sat along the Sea Shore near to which the present-day funeral ground Swargadwara is positioned. It was dusk hours when Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and His accompanist Bhai Mardana Ji were performing Kirtan with the Sangat (Congregation). At that instance, Bhai Mardana Ji feels and conveying this message, Guruji responded him to visit the Holy Jagannath Temple and acquire the Maha Prasad. Adhering to the advice of Guruji, Bhai Mardana Ji went to the Temple, but he was denied entrance for being a Muslim.

Returning from the Temple, he complained and bestowed his arrogance on Guruji to which Guruji responded with a smile and instructed him to do Naam Simran. Guruji even assured him that Prasad would come by its own. Obeying Guruji's instructions, Bhai Mardana Ji sat for Naam Simran. At same occurrence, the Holy Aarti was about to begin in Jagannath Temple. The Prasad was being offered to Jagannath Ji but to the surprise of spectators, the golden plate on which the Prasad was served near the idol blew up into the air and started flowing towards the sea shore where Guruji was seated. The crowd as well as the Pandas of the temple followed the plate and reached near Guruji.

There was a Panda named Sadanada Pratihari to whom Guruji returned the golden plate after taking the Prasad and the plate is still preserved in Jagannath Temple Treasury. The news was conveyed to the king named Raja Pratap Rudrachandra Dev who was at his colleague's residence at Cuttack. The very next day the king arrived Puri and bowed to Guruji near the sea shore. He then requested Guruji to have abode in his palace but Guruji denied. Guruji resided in a place which is some yards away from the temple where the present day Mangu Math stands erect.

The Mangu Matth was evidently persisting but in form of a mud house when Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji visited Jagannath Puri and it was the place where the king and the local populace came here to meet Guru Sahib and sought His blessings. A colossal structure to this mud house was given in 16th century by Mahant Mangu Daas Ji. Guruji stayed here for 22 days and it is the same place where the King requested Guruji to join the Holy Aarti of Jagannath Temple.

Guru Sahib agreed to join the congregation and soon when Guru Sahib entered the temple premise, lamps were lighted in the tunes of temple bells and the dance of devotees started. Guru Sahib did not enter the Garva Gruha where Jagannath Ji was seated. He chose to remain out of the Garva Gruha in the temple premises and looking onto the sky, He started murmuring something.

As soon as the rituals were over, the priests came growling towards Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji like man-eaters finding themselves face to face with a daring hunter sitting in his own den. With all the ferocity at their command, they probed –

“Why did you not enter the temple and stand up when the Aarti (worship with lamps) was being performed before Jagannath Lord of the universe? Can you tell us what kind of a holy man are you?”

Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji retorted –

“I too was performing the Aarti” said Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji, “before the Lord of the universe, my friend. The whole creation, the whole firmament joined me in my spiritual worship of the true Lord, only your mind and your hearts were turned against it. I worshipped the supreme Light; you worshipped the stone image. I worshipped the Spirit all-pervading; you worshipped the idol of your god. I sat in contemplation of the eternal Word (Logos), the Shabad, while you were chanting the mantras without understanding them. My mind was fixed on the eternal presence of the Lord, while your mind lingered greedily on the offerings before the idol, which you hope to enjoy. My mind was

**enchanted by the Unstuck Music of the universe and the fragrance of His
presence in Nature, when your mind was lost in the noise of the temple bells,
and the rhythm of the dancers feigning ecstasy”**

The Vaishnava priests queried –

**“And may we hear your Aarti and see it performed before the Lord of the
Universe”?**

While Bhai Mardana Ji played the Rabab, Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji sang his
Aarti, in Raga Dhanashri which is inscribed underneath –

**Gagan Mai Thhaal Rav Chandh Dheepak Banae Thaarikaa Manddal Janak
Mothee ||**

**Upon that cosmic plate of the sky, the sun and the moon are the lamps. The stars
and their orbs are the studded pearls.**

Dhhoop Malaaanalo Pavan Chavaro Karae Sagal Banaraae Foolanth Jothee ||1||

**The fragrance of sandalwood in the air is the temple incense, and the wind is the
fan. All the plants of the world are the altar flowers in offering to You, O
Luminous Lord. ||1||**

Kaisee Aarathee Hoe ||

What a beautiful Aarti, lamp-lit worship service this is!

Bhav Khanddanaa Thaeree Aarathee ||

O Destroyer of Fear, this is Your Ceremony of Light.

Anehathaa Sabadh Vaajanth Bhaeree ||1|| Rehaao ||

**The Unstruck Sound-current of the Shabad is the vibration of the temple drums.
||1||Pause||**

**Sehas Thav Nain Nan Nain Hehi Thohi Ko Sehas Moorath Nanaa Eaek Thuohee
||**

**You have thousands of eyes, and yet You have no eyes. You have thousands of
forms, and yet You do not have even one.**

**Sehas Padh Bimal Nan Eaek Padh Gandhh Bin Sehas Thav Gandhh Eiv Chalath
Mohee ||2||**

You have thousands of Lotus Feet, and yet You do not have even one foot. You have no nose, but you have thousands of noses. This Play of Yours entrances me.
||2||

Sabh Mehi Joth Joth Hai Soe ||

Amongst all is the Light-You are that Light.

This Dhai Chanaan Sabh Mehi Chanaan Hoe ||

**By this Illumination, that Light is radiant within all.
Gur Saakhee Joth Paragatt Hoe ||**

Through the Guru's Teachings, the Light shines forth.

Jo This Bhaavai S Aarathee Hoe ||3||

That which is pleasing to Him is the lamp-lit worship service. ||3||

Har Charan Kaval Makarandh Lobhith Mano Anadhinuo Mohi Aahee Piaasaa ||

My mind is enticed by the honey-sweet Lotus Feet of the Lord. Day and night, I thirst for them.

**Kirapaa Jal Dhaehi Naanak Saaring Ko Hoe Jaa Thae Thaerai Naae Vaasaa
||4||3||**

Bestow the Water of Your Mercy upon Nanak, the thirsty song-bird, so that he may come to dwell in Your Name. ||4||3||

Hearing to the Aarti, The Raja, the Local Chief, and Panda Kaliyuga the priest of the temple all fell at the sacred feet of Guruji. The place where Guru Sahib recited Aarti can be depicted in two ways –

On entering the premises of Jagannath Temple from the North Eastern Gate which is termed as Singh Dwaar (Lion's Gate) and climbing the 22 steps to reach the main sanctorum epitomized as Garva Gruha (the main temple where Jagannath Ji is seated), it can be visualized that towards the left side of the main sanctorum (Garva Gruha) there is a place named Panda Kalyug Damodar Estate which belongs to the descendants of Panda Kalyug who can be introduced as the first disciple of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji in Jagannath Puri and was blessed with a Manji to spread Nankian Philosophy. Adjacent to the Panda Kalyug Damodar Estate, a centuries old tree named Kalapa Vriksh by the Local people.

Even today, it is worshipped as sacred tree where people tie knots of sacred thread to fulfil their wishes. Under this tree, there exists the exact spot where Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji recited the Holy Aarti. This account is mentioned in almost all Historical Accounts penned by the Odia and Sikh Historians. While stepping out of the present

main sanctorum epitomized as Garva Gruha, this place can be visualized to be positioned towards the right side of the Garva Gruha.

It has to be noted that in 1868, Smith, Sanitary Commissioner of Bengal reported that Punjabis came to Puri walking on foot 2000 miles for six-month long journey. They used to stay at Puri a day or two and walked home happily. In 1873, J.S. Armstrong, Magistrate to the Commissioner, Odisha Division, wrote about the Mangu Matth and its Sikh occupants. A chronological sequence of the Mahants of Mangu Matth is furnished beneath –

1. Baba Sri Chand Ji (1629)
2. Baba Guru Dutta
3. Balu Hasa Ji
4. Guru Jadav Rai
5. Guru Shah Ji
6. Udhav Rai Ji
7. Jiwan Das Ji
8. Balak Das Ji
9. Jodha Ram Das Ji
10. Sangat Das Ji
11. Medha Das Ji
12. Gotra Das Ji
13. Mangu Das Ji
14. Gobind Ram Das Ji
15. Sukhdev Ram Das Ji
16. Har Sharan Das Ji
17. Khushal Ram Ji
18. Sant Prasad Das Ji
19. Gobind Ram Das Ji
20. Kirpa Ram Das Ji
21. Kashi Ram Das Ji
22. Mahant Baidyanath Das Ji
23. Mahant Bhavani Shankar Das (Present Mahant)

The Gajapati Maharaj of Puri named Raja Vira Keshari Deva in his 18th Anka which corresponds to the period from 2nd September, 1750 to 22nd August 1751 had granted the right of Chawar Seva and Mayur Pankh Seva in 41 Anka which corresponds from September, 1765 to September, 1769 to be rendered by Udasi Govind Das who was Mahant of the Mangu Matth.

It is in Mangu Matth where Sangat appealed Guruji of their issues being faced for the scarcity of fresh water for which Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji ordered Bhai Mardana to get a well dug and the place where the well was dug got its name entitled as Bauli Matth. The specialty is that the Bauli Matth has 38 steps leading to the well as similar to the 38 no. of Pauri (Stanzas) of Japji Sahib composed by Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji. The Bauli Matth is now having the daily Sikh Rituals and Seva under Sikh Sangat.

There is another Matth which was inhabited by Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji while He was in Puri. History prevails that being inspired by Guruji's principles, the king of Puri donated 24 acres of Land to commemorate Guru Nanak Dharamshala just in front of the south gate of Jagannath Temple.

It was then named as Guru Nanak Matth. But after Guru Sahib's departure, it was sixth Guru – Shri Har Gobind Ji who appointed Bhai Almast for the mission of spreading Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's universal message in the states of West Bengal and Puri. He took shelter in Guru Nanak Matth and did the renovations of Bauli Matth, Mangu Matth and Guru Nanak Matth.

When he departed from Puri, Sikhs from far wide came and used to take refuge in Guru Nanak Matth which was then renamed by the local populace and still now known as Punjabi Matth. History even prevails that the 9th Sikh Guru – Satguru Shri Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji visited the land of Jagannath Puri and visited the Jagannath Temple Premises where Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji recited Aarti, stayed at Panda Kalyug's Residence and even visited the Matths related to Guruji's visit during His stay in Puri. At first, Guruji rested along the Sea Shore and then He resided at present day Gurdwara Bauli Matth Sahib for about a fortnight. Legend prevails that this Matth was even renovated by Guruji.

Legend also prevails that when Satguru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Maharaj was executed on the orders of Aurangzeb – The Mughal Emperor, a royal notice or order (Farman) to the king of Puri – The Hon. Gajapati Maharaj Dibya Singha Deb I who was on throne from 1689 to 1716 commanding him to bring out all the Sikhs prevailing in Bauli Matth, Mangu Matth and Punjabi Matth on the roads and start beheading them all thus, not sparing a single Sikh alive. This Royal Mughal Farman is still in the possession of the existing king of Puri – The Hon. Gajapati Maharaj Dibya Singha Deb IV who is on the throne since 8th July, 1970.

After Guruji, it was Maharaja Ranjit Singh who visited Puri and got the three Matths

renovated. He also installed Satguru Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji in Mangu Matth as well as Punjabi Matth and resided in Punjabi Matth with his large troop of soldiers. Maharaja Ranjit Singh also got the south gate of Jagannath Temple renovated, got inscribed Guruji's Aarti inscribed at the right corner of the south gate of Jagannath Temple which is no longer prevailing and 40 feet above of Jagannath Temple, Maharaja Ranjit Singh Ji's sword was preserved which is no longer existent after the cyclone of 2018.

It can also be visualized that the descendants of Panda Kalyug (a Panda who met Guruji) were doing the Seva of Satguru Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Maharaj in Mangu Matth. Giani Gyan Singh Ji has given a vivid account of this in his book – Twarikh Guru Khalsa Patshahi 1. They have also been appreciated with Copper plate inscribed Huqumnas from Sri Akal Takhat Sahib consecutively in the years 1810 & 1866 which are still preserved in their residence. The installation of Satguru Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji in Mangu Matth was visualized till 1987 after which Guru Maharaj was removed and it is a great hurt to the Sikh Religion.

One day while Raja and all other devotees were assembled to pay homage to Lord Jagannath, Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji explained them the real meaning of God. He told the crowd that God is present everywhere and does not belong to any individual or specific community. By saying so, He even explained that the name Jagannath tends to Lord of the Universe and not a specific wooden deity. That name is of Supreme Lord from where we all are originated. The mission of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's Udasi can be encrypted as the appreciation to the masses of his ideology, freed people from superstitions and infructuous deeds, caste-based differences and freeing them from the shackles of fake hermits and Yogis.

This incident took place in 1510. A Brahmin named 'Kalyug' had made his abode there. He was a learned man besides being very rich. Many pilgrims were his followers and often stayed in his Dera (Camp) in the illusion of Spiritual Upliftment. This Panda was swindling the gullible people who were not aware of what the true religion was. Many rich persons who visited him were more interested in knowing about their future life or the life hereafter. They would feel happy listening to good and favorable stories about themselves. Pleased with such fables, they would make handsome offerings to him.

Though Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji explained the real essence of Almighty and condemned the ritualistic Aarti (A form of prayer in temples), he also unmasked the deeds of 'Kalyug' Pandit. Kalyug Pandit was sitting in meditative mood while many devotees were surrounding him. He had a small pitcher like metallic container placed in his front in which the pilgrims were putting their offerings.

He would close his eyes for some time and open them again. Sometimes he would close one of his nostrils, either right or left with his hand. Then he would suddenly declare that he is seeing Vishnu Bhagwan in the heaven. Similarly, he would claim an audience with other gods and his visits to Brahmpuri (Abode of Brahma) and Shivrपुरi (Abode of Shiv Ji). The devotees were listening to all his claims with rapt silence and expected that soon he would take them to the divine trip too. He then asked all those

present to shut their eyes and perceive the heaven in their minds, and he would help them visualizing.

When all those present there closed their eyes, Guru Ji signaled Bhai Mardana Ji to pick up the small pitcher like container from his front and hide it behind him in a bush. When the ‘Pandit’ opened his eyes, he did not see the container in his front. He was beside himself with rage and started shouting loudly and asking who had taken his small container.

Panda Kalyug with all his rage shouted –

“Don’t crack jokes with the Saints. We don’t crave for money... etc.”.

The pilgrims in his attendance were also surprised. Hearing his shouts, many more people gathered around.

Guru Ji stepped forward and uttered –

“Pandit Ji, you were able to see Brahmpuri, Shivpuri and Vishnupuri, why don’t you look around in this Universe? You may be able to locate where the container is lying”.

Hearing these remarks, the ‘Pandit’ vexed still more.

Some present also commented –

“Pandit Ji, you were seeing the divine abode but now you can’t find your small pitcher. How could it be?”

The Pandit was dumb struck.

People understood the deceit of the Pandit. Guru Ji well disclosed his beguile and advised people that those who sit in meditative postures, closing their eyes, nose and ears were not to be trusted. They were like herons that stood still on one leg in the water to pounce upon at fish and frogs.

Here was that ‘Pandit’ who could see the divine abodes but could not spot his money container lying behind him. Guru Ji further explained that these were the tricks used by the imposters to swindle people of their hard-earned money. Satguru Ji explained to all the pilgrims that one may succeed in collecting money by closing eyes, nose, ears and sitting still like a heron, but it can neither lift the character of a man nor raise his spiritual life.

This human life is not meant to be wasted in such spurious and fake acts. Remembering God is the right path of this life. Perpetual meditation of His name relieves a man from the worldly desires. Kalyug Pandit was highly impressed by the personality of Guru Ji and his sermons. He requested Guru Ji to honor him with his stay in his abode. Guru Ji agreed and during this period apprised him with his ideology. He was then appointed as a missionary by Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji to spread Guru Ji’s message; whereas he used to swindle the people earlier, now he was teaching them to follow the right

path of life as dictated by Guruji.

Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji composed the above event in the following Shabad of Rag Dhanashri which is present in Ang 662 of Satguru Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Maharaj –

Ik Oankaar Sathigur Prasaadh ||

One Universal Creator God. By The Grace of The True Guru:

Kaal Naahee Jog Naahee Naahee Sath Kaa Dtab ||

No, no, this is not the time, when people know the way to Yoga and Truth.

Thhaanasatt Jag Bharisatt Hoeae Ddoobathaa Eiv Jag ||1||

The holy places of worship in the world are polluted, and so the world is drowning. ||1||

Kal Mehi Raam Naam Saar ||

In this Dark Age of Kali Yuga, the Lord's Name is the most sublime.

Akhee Th Meettehi Naak Pakarrehi Thagan Ko Sansaar ||1|| Rehaao ||

Some people try to deceive the world by closing their eyes and holding their nostrils closed. ||1||Pause||

Aaant Saethee Naak Pakarrehi Soojhathae Thin Loa ||

They close off their nostrils with their fingers, and claim to see the three worlds.

Magar Paashhai Kashh N Soojhai Eachu Padham Aloa ||2||

But they cannot even see what is behind them. What a strange lotus pose this is! ||2||

Khathreeaa Th Dhharam Shhoddiaa Malaeshh Bhaakhiaa Gehee ||

The Kshatriyas have abandoned their religion, and have adopted a foreign language.

Srisatt Sabh Eik Varan Hoe Dhharam Kee Gath Rehee ||3||

The whole world has been reduced to the same social status; the state of righteousness and Dharma has been lost. ||3||

Asatt Saaj Saaj Puraan Sodhhehi Karehi Baedh Abhiaas ||

They analyse eight chapters of (Panini's grammar and the Puranas. They study the Vedas)

Bin Naam Har Kae Mukath Naahee Kehai Naanak Dhaas ||4||1||6||8||

But without the Lord's Name, no one is liberated; so says Nanak, the Lord's slave. ||4||1||6||8||

History prevails that the Seva of Guruji's memory was given to Panda Kalyug in 1512 and till now the descendants of Panda Kalyug are residing in Puri.

Close to the sea, lies the funeral ground of Puri, which we term as Swargadwara and it is the most sacred funeral ground of Odisha. Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and Bhai Mardana Ji were sitting along the sea shore. Suddenly, some people carried a corpse and arrived. Preparations were made for the rites. Earlier epoch had tradition that if a corpse remains burnt half, or some portions of the corpse remain unburnt, then the remaining portions were thrown into water bodies.

Same incident happened in presence of Guru Sahib and Bhai Mardana Ji. The rites started for the corpse but it got half burnt. Hence it was needed to be thrown into the sea. But the waves transcended again the corpse to the shore. Suddenly, a weak jackal that was apparent to have eaten nothing since many days. Glancing the corpse, it ran towards it. But smelling it, he stayed away. Bhai Mardana Ji was amazed at this sight.

He enquired Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji –

**“Being his food, which he hardly gets and has turned very weak,
how can he ignore the corpse?”**

Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji replied –

**“The human whose corpse is lying by had no Guru in this birth. So, he is so
impure that even the Jackal did not touch him.**

Hence, with Guru and His grace only, one can cross the worldly sea.”

Thus, marks the end of portions related to Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj's visit to Jagannath Puri in the Daily Records of the Temple (Madala Panji).

History prevails that Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and Chaitanya Mahaprabhu both met at Puri and spent some time there. This incident is recorded in Chaitanya Bhagavat authored by Ishwar Das written in Odia Language in the seventeenth century. This serves as the second evidential record of Guruji's visit to Jagannath Puri. But this work is being misinterpreted by many only in a motive to suppress the significance of Guruji and Sikh Religion which clearly connotes to RSS and Shiv Sena Propaganda. The author of this manuscript was one of Mahaprabhu's close associates in Puri, and the only biographer to mention the event, perhaps because the meeting was brief and only the eyewitness devotees of Puri knew about it. I had the opportunity to go through this manuscript in the Govt. Library of Jagannath Puri and translate the portions pertaining to Guruji which I am penning beneath. Ishwar Das mentions the following incidents in

Chaitanya Bhagavat:

In the very first meeting, Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and Chaitanya Mahaprabhu Ji saw each other and with great anxiousness, moved under a Banyan Tree and sat in meditative pose. Suddenly Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji rose up and started moving. The crowds present were in Trans by seeing this strange incident. On an instance, Bhai Mardana Ji enquired Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji about His strange attribute. Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji replied: -

“I am finding the creator of the one to whom He is seeking.”

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu who was entering the temple of Lord Jagannath, he met Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji who was coming out. Both offered Pranams to each other. Then Mahaprabhu turned and started to leave the temple. Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji asked him why he was not going inside to have Darshan. Mahaprabhu replied: -

‘I have already seen the Lord’.

In Adhyaya 64 of the Ishwar Das’s Chaitanya Bhagavat, it is encrypted that –

“Srinibasaye Vishwambhar Kirtan madyare vihar Nanak Saranga ye dui Rupa Sanatana duibhai Jagai Maadhai ekatra Kirtan Karanti Nritya”.

In the congregational singing led by Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu in Nagar Purushottama (Puri Dham), Nanak and Saranga (another name for Bhai Mardana Ji who played the sarangi), the two bothers Rupa and Sanatana along with Jagai and Maadhai also joined in. Gopal Guru, for whom Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji had deep affection, was there as well, along with Nityananda Prabhu, who was considered an incarnation of Balarama. They all relished the Kirtan at Jagannath Puri.

It was at the same time, July that Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu had taken up permanent residence in Jagannath Puri at the house of Kasi Mishra. Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu invited Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji to his own personal dwelling. In fact, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu reverently entertained him, and even asked one of his disciples, Udyata, to see to the personal comforts of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and take special care of Him.

Post to these events this soil gave rise to Himmat Rai who inscribed the name of Jagannath Puri in Golden Letters on the pages of Sikh History. Born on 18th of January in the year 1661 to Bhai Gulzari Ji and Mata Dhanoo Ji who belonged to a low caste background of water carriers, he was divine since his childhood. At the time he reached Anandpur where Dashmesh Pita Satguru Dhan Dhan Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji was holding the Baisakhi occasion, he was five years older to Guru Pita. His name Himmat itself connotes to the meaning of Courage or brave in Punjabi. He was one of the initial five Sikhs who one by one offered to lay down their heads in response to the Guru’s successive calls made at an assembly of the Sikhs especially summoned on the occasion of Baisakhi corresponding to 14th April, 1699. He along with the other four received the vows of the Khalsa from Dashmesh Pita Satguru Dhan Dhan Shri Guru

Gobind Singh Ji's hands and was given the name Himmat Singh.

Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji while travelling from Puri crossed Alarnath temple located in Brahmagiri and reached a village named Dahinkhia or Manikapatana. The village itself is historically significant as the village is named after Manika, a milkmaid who had supposedly sold yogurt to Lord Jagannath and Lord Balabhadra when they were on their way to Kanchi.

The word 'Manikapatana' is a combination of two words 'Manika' and 'Patana'. 'Manika', the name of the milkmaid and 'Patana' means 'Village' which is quite close to the mouth of the Chilika Lake. A lady used to reside in this village during Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's visit. She had a pious wish to feed Guru Sahib with curd similarly as did Manika to Lord Jagannath and Lord Balabhadra. Guru Sahib could know her wish and came to her residence.

Seeing to Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the lady started rolling down tears and Guru Sahib asked her for the curd which she had kept for Him. Her joy knew no bounds. The ever-knowing Master gifted her with His used clothes, His stick and departed towards South.

Decades ago, this village was completely flooded and the relics of Guru Sahib were ruined. Even the residence which Guru Sahib visited no more exists. The successors of the lady are residing in a neighboring village. From here, Guruji proceeded on the banks of Chilika Lake and reached the Mahendragiri Mountains currently persisting in the Gajapati District. The mountain finds such a location that on one side of the mountain, one can eye the Sea and the other side of the mountain, there's a River.

This mountain has a deep context to Hindu mythology as it is believed that Parshuram Ji is still residing in mountain and is continuing his Sadhna, the Five Pandavas of Mahabharat constructed few temples which can still be noticed and a Shiv Temple which is considered to be the holiest shrine.

When Guruji reached this place, He observed people walking long distances and ascending the mountain to reach the temples. He had Siddh Gosht (Spiritual Debate) with the priests of these temples and showed them the path of worshipping True Lord. The locals present as well as the priests got devoted to Guruji and became His followers. This marks the end of places related to Guruji's visit to Odisha.

A most important historical context of Odisha prevails in the literary work of Dashmesh Pita, entitled Sri Dasam Granth Sahib Ji under the title of Charitropakhiyan. These stories serve for the reader a set of crunch situations and provides oneself with morals to be drawn. Kalgidhar Pita has inscribed these Opakhyan (means already told) stories to Sikhs as a test of their morality which is the study of Human Nature in this world and gives detailed explanation of positive and negative characters, so that Khalsa could play a Safe Game. Charitropakhiyan is study of Hell. The world is like hell where we are thrown out to improve ourselves. This literary work of Guru Pita consists of an account of various narratives in which the central plot and story is:

King Chitra Singh of Chitravati married a damsel from Indra's kingdom, and had a son named Hanuvant Singh through her. When the king got old, she deserted him and fled from his kingdom. He ordered a search party to find her, but instead found another similar looking girl named Chitramati, who was the daughter of the ruler of Orissa. He married her after he won a fight with her father, the ruler of Orissa.

Chitramati was about the age of the son of Chitra Singh, and she got heavily attracted to him. She tried to seduce him into sexual relationship, but he was not to go for incest. She in turn, arranged a high-profile drama and accused Hanuvant Singh of raping her, which the King Chitra Singh believed and sentenced his son to death.

The wise adviser of the King knew that his second wife was not of a pious character and was falsely blaming Hanuvant Singh. In order to prevent this injustice to be inflicted onto Hanuvant Singh, the adviser shared various accounts of stories depicting different situations intended to make the King realize his folly and improve his decision-making skill.

Kalgidhar Patshah Sahib Sri Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj in His own written “Sri Sarbaloh Granth Sahib Ji” has mentioned the name of Odisha. In His Bani, Dashmesh Pita has penned that the Sarbaloh Avtar has been embodied in the present district of Jagannath Puri prevailing in this state. Thus, writes Dashmesh Pita in Chapter 5 of Sri Sarbaloh Granth Sahib Ji on Sarbaloh Avtar,

“ਅਥ ਸਰੂਪ ਅਨੁਮਾਨ ਕਥਤੇ ਬਿਸਨੁਪਦ ਛੰਤ ਦੀਪਕ ਤ੍ਵ ਬਲ ॥

Now begins the description of the Form [of Sri Sarbaloh Avatar]

ਸੀਸ ਸੁਹਾਵਨੁ ਚਕ੍ਰ ਸੀਸ ਸੁਹਾਵਨੁ ਚਕ੍ਰ ਹੇ ਅਤਿ ਉਤੰਗ ਖਗ ਬਕ੍ਰ ਹੇ ਦੀਰਘ ਭੀਮ ਕਰਾਲ ॥

Adorning a beautiful quoit on the head! Adorning a beautiful quoit on the head!

Holding a very large Kharag, Oh the appearance is so ferocious!

ਕੇਸ ਛੁਟੇ ਸਰ ਸੇਲ ਕੇਸ ਛੁਟੇ ਸਰ ਸੇਲ ਹੇਘੰਘਰਾਰੇ ਕਚ ਸੇਲ ਹੇ ਮੁਨਜਨੀਕ ਚਖੁ ਲਾਲ ॥

With hair open and sharp as spears ! Oh the hair is open and sharp as spears !

The hair is curly ! The red eyes are that of gun barrels !

ਨਾਵਕ ਪਲਕ ਅਨਯਾਰ ਨਾਵਕ ਪਲਕ ਅਨਯਾਰ ਹੇ ਤੁਪਕ ਨਾਸਿਕ ਗਾਰ ਹੇ ਸ੍ਰਵਨ ਚਰਮ ਮੁਖ ਖਾਲ
॥

With eyelashes like broad-head arrowheads! Oh, the eyelashes like broad-head arrowheads!

The nostrils are the barrels of a gun! Oh, the mouth and ears are those of Shields!

ਰਦਨ ਕਟਾਰਨ ਦਾੜ ਰਦਨ ਕਟਾਰਨ ਦਾੜ ਹੇ ਖੰਜਰ ਬਾਕ ਦੁਧਾਰ ਹੇ ਖੰਡਾ ਜੀਹ ਬਿਸਾਲ ॥

The teeth and beard are sharp Punch Daggers [Katar], Oh the teeth and beard are sharp Punch Daggers!

The speech is a dagger! Oh, the tongue is a double-edged sword [khanda]!

ਹਸਤ ਤੁਫੰਗ ਨਖ ਢਾਰ ਹਸਤ ਤੁਫੰਗ ਨਖ ਢਾਰ ਹੇ ਸਾਯਕ ਅੰਗੁਲਿਯ ਫਾਰ ਹੇ ਨਖ ਸਿਖ ਬਯਾਘ੍ਰ
ਖੰਕਾਲ ॥੧੬੮॥੬੬॥੨੩੮੫॥

The hands are guns and the nails are shields ! Oh the hands are guns and the nails are shields!

The fingers are arrowheads ! Oh what a ferocious force with nails and a head like a lion !

ਜੰਘ ਪਾਦ ਭੁਜਦੰਡ ਜੰਘ ਪਾਦ ਭੁਜਦੰਡ ਹੇ ਦੀਰਘ ਮੇਰੁ ਪ੍ਰਚੰਡ ਹੇ ਸ੍ਵਾਸਾ ਤਜਿਤ ਚਾਲ ॥

The legs, lotus feet, and great arms ! Oh the legs, lotus feet and great arms !

The reflection/effect of His presence is as massive a mountain ! From the breathe comes fire !

ਉਦਰ ਪ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟਿ ਗਿਰ ਕੰਦ੍ਰ ਉਦਰ ਪ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟਿ ਗਿਰ ਕੰਦ੍ਰ ਹੇ ਬਜਰੰਗੀ ਹੇਮ ਮੰਦ੍ਰਿ ਹੇ ਕਰਦ ਤਿਛ ਰੋਮਾਲ ॥

His back is as big as a mountain and His stomach is like a cave ! Oh His back is as big as a mountain and His stomach is like a cave !

The body is strong like the Himalaya Mountains ! The hair across His body are sharp small daggers !

ਭਾਨੁ ਭਯਾਨਕ ਚੱਛੁ ਭਾਨੁ ਭਯਾਨਕ ਚੱਛੁ ਹੇ ਬਯਾਘ੍ਰਨਾਦ ਬਲ ਜੱਛੁ ਹੇ ਤੱਛਕ ਬਾਸੁਕਿ ਬਯਾਲ ॥

The ferocious eyes are burning like the sun! Oh the ferocious eyes are burning like the sun!

Even the Tachak and Vasik [great powerful snake warriors] worship Your great power !

ਬਿਸ੍ਵਰੂਪ ਮਹਾਕਾਲ ਬਿਸ੍ਵਰੂਪ ਮਹਾਕਾਲ ਹੇ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਭਏ ਗੋਪਾਲ ਹੇ ਸਰਬਲੋਹ ਮਮ ਪਾਲ
॥੧੬੯॥੬੭॥੨੩੮੬॥

The creator of the World is the Destroyer of Death! The creator of the World is the

Destroyer of Death!

The Protector of the World has come! Oh Sri Sarbloh, the Protector of the World !

ਅਦਭੁਤ ਰੂਪ ਅਨੂਪ ਅਦਭੁਤ ਰੂਪ ਅਨੂਪ ਹੇ ਪ੍ਰਗਟੇ ਬਿਸ੍ਵ ਸ੍ਵਰੂਪ ਹੇ ਬਿਸ੍ਵੰਭਰ ਜਗਦੀਸ ॥

Possessing a Wonderful Form It cannot be put to words! Oh Possessing a Wonderful Form It cannot be put to words!

Taking the Form of the World, He is the Protector of the World, oh Lord of the World!

ਦੁਸ਼ਟ ਦਲਨ ਖਲ ਗੰਜ ਦੁਸ਼ਟ ਦਲਨ ਖਲ ਗੰਜ ਹੇ ਗਰਬ ਪ੍ਰਹਾਰ ਭਯ ਭੰਜ ਹੇ ਜਗਕਰਤਾ ਬਿਸ੍ਵੀਸ ॥

Destroyer of the enemies, Oh you are the destroyer of the enemies!

You destroy the proud ! You destroy fear! Oh, The doer of the World! Lord of the World!

ਮੰਗਲ ਕਰਨ ਸਦੀਵ ਮੰਗਲ ਕਰਨ ਸਦੀਵ ਹੇ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਸੁਧਾ ਸਜੀਵ ਹੇ ਪੁਰਨ ਬਿਸ੍ਵੇਸ਼ੀਸ ॥

You are constantly in Bliss; Oh You are constantly in bliss!

You are the highest of Amrit, accept this with full confidence!

ਚਿਰੰਜੀਵ ਚਿਰੰਜੀਵ ਚਿਰੰਜੀਵ ਚਿਰੰਜੀਵ ਹੇ ਘਟ ਘਟ ਬਾਸੀ ਪੀਵ ਹੇ ਪੁਰਖੋਤਮ ਖਲ ਪੀਸ
॥੧੭੦॥੬੮॥੨੩੮੭॥

You are everlasting! Oh, you are everlasting!

You are the Master of all your creation [in all the parts] ! Most revered ! The destroyer of ignorance!

Hence, it can be keenly observed that Guru Sahib has cited this district of Odisha in “Sri Dasam Granth Sahib Ji” as well as in “Sri Sarbaloh Granth Sahib Ji”. I appeal all the readers of this book to go through these magnificent literary works of Dashmesh Pita Sahib Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj.

The royal records of Bhavanipatna Kingdom in Odisha are suggestive of the 1st ever Sikh Gurdwara getting constructed in this state. The Gurdwara is standing currently at the center of the town in the location termed as Thana Chowk. One of my dearest Mr. Gur Charan Singh Sandhu residing in this province has cleared me the fact pertaining to the history of this Gurdwara Sahib through the beneath penned lines,

“Abinash Veer Ji, my great grandfather holds a very deep connection with this Gurdwara Sahib. It was in the year 1916, Bhavanipatna was ruled by Raja Brajamohan Keshari Deb. For the development of his kingdom of Kalahandi, he

planned to invite workmen from different states for better outcome.

The main development which he sought was the advent of electricity and in that epoch the electrical power machine used to run on crude oil. For this purpose, the king invited my great grandfather named Pala Singh from Kolkata. There was only a single British owned company in West Bengal named Cross Lee which used to supply electricity all over the country of India. This was the officially registered company for the country and hence anyone seeking electricity had to contact this company.

The king had to first seek permission from British Government for this purpose. My great grandfather was serving in this company and the king invited him to make necessary set ups of the electrical power machine in his state. Thus, accepting the invitation of the king, my great grandfather arrived and departed just after finishing the setup. Months surpassed and the Raja thought of making further developments.

Though Raja had close relationship with the residents of Kolkata, he observed there were taxi services near the railway station. This service was owned by my great grandfather and the charge of this business was given to Hakim Singh. The Raja wished to commence the same system here in Kalahandi. The Raja invited my great grandfather and his relatives to commence the same taxi services business here with a payment of double their income.

The services thus commenced and the Raja gave Hakim Singh Ji all the responsibilities related to transportation in his state. The transportation business flourished and hence, an organization Kalahandi State Transport was formed which was sealed by Sardar Ballavh Bhai Patel in the year 1947. Pala Singh Ji worked relentlessly for the development of the kingdom of Kalahandi and in the year of 1926, he set up a power house and thus electricity was supplied in almost every portion of this realm.

The powerhouse can still be eyed as constructed by my great grandfather at Gandhi Chowk. The Raja then invited a Sikh from Punjab named Panja Singh to renovate the palace with wood carvings and fascinations. At first Panja Singh denied to visit but the Raja put forth the agreement of paying him the wealth as sought. When there was a group of 7 to 8 Sikhs, they urged the Raja to get them a place for constructing Gurdwara Sahib where they can conduct their daily prayers.

The Raja donated a piece of land at the present-day Gandhi Chowk and while the works were going on, the Raja offered them a room in Palace to conduct the daily prayers. Satguru Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Maharaj was established in the palace and the daily worships were made. The construction of Gurdwara Sahib was accomplished and Satguru Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Maharaj was shifted from the palace to the Gurdwara Sahib with Sardar Panja Singh appointed as Granthi.

The Khalsa Raj grew profound and attracted large number of masses. Raja was deeply influenced by the Seva of the Sikhs and out of ecstasy, he donated more 15 acres' land besides the Gurdwara Sahib for agriculture and continuation of Langar Seva. This Gurdwara is entitled as Gurdwara Shri Guru Singh Sabha and is still prevailing in Gandhi Chowk”.

The royal records of Koraput Kingdom in Odisha is suggestive of a Gurdwara Sahib in Koraput which embraces a legendary locus in launching the Khalsa Establishments in the state of Odisha. The history ways back to the influx of Sardar Mahna Singh to Odisha in the year 1891 – A Ramgharia Sikh hailing from village Lola near Amritsar, Punjab who was hired by the king of Jeypore named Raja Bikram Dev at Vishakhapatnam to build his palace in Koraput. The biography of Sardar Mahna Singh states that though he had a physical disability, he was an excellent warrior and a fine builder.

Sardar Mahna Singh arrived with his nephew and met the king. After getting the contract signed of getting the palace built, Sardar Mahna Singh returned to Punjab and brought back 200 skilled workers who were carpenters as well as masons. It was in year 1893 that Sardar Mahna Singh proposed the king,

“Maharaj, here we Sikhs are 100s in number. Please allot us a land where we can construct our place of worship i.e. a Gurdwara Sahib”.

The king readily agreed and donated a piece of land where a Gurdwara was constructed. It was the second Sikh Gurdwara in the state after the Gurdwara pertaining to the district of Bhavanipatna. The King too gifted a double-edged sword to Sardar Mahna Singh Ji which can still be eyed in the Gurdwara Sahib. It took 10 years for Sardar Mahna Singh and his clans to get the palace for the king constructed.

Sardar Mahna Singh and his Sikhs prospered well in business and settled in Koraput. The king too used to discuss the important matters of the kingdom with Sardar Mahna Singh and soon he was declared as one of the advisory officials to the king. The Gurdwara which was an old thatched hut was transformed into a Pukka structure with the help of the king and soon the Gurdwara was a place of reverence for the local Odia prevailing in that region. Sardar Mahna Singh took the charges of serving the society and few of his noble deeds are penned beneath –

1. He financially assisted in the marriage of 200 girls.
2. He allowed mendicants to travel in free of charge in his buses and provided basic necessities to them.
3. He even spent thousands and lakhs annually to serve he needy.
4. Getting inspired by his deeds, large number of people flocked to Gurdwara Sahib and attended the gur Purab, Langar and other significant festive.

A successful Khalsa Raj was thus established in the province of Koraput, Odisha.

Then it comes Gurdwara Shri Guru Singh Sabha, Garposh which embraces a legendary locus in launching the Khalsa Establishments in the state of Odisha. My dearest Sardar Jasbir Singh Viridi is the present President of Gurdwara Shri Guru Singh Sabha, Garposh. He himself has penned the following lines pertaining to the Historicity of this Gurdwara Sahib –

“From the land of five rivers named Punjab, where the founder of Sikhism, Dhan Dhan Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji was born in 1469 and Sikhism is spreading worldwide till now, thus came to Odisha – Sardar Basant Singh for wooden slipper supply to Railway Authority 129 years ago connoting to the year 1891; under Bamanda State Jurisdiction. Initially he had started the jungle produce works under Sundargarh King Lt. Raghunath Sekhar Deo. At that time Bamanda National Railway track works were in progress. He had established himself in a small village Garposh, which was very convenient to him for his business.

Sardar Basant Singh had a religious personality, so that he had a faith on Sikhism and always kept Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji with him. Initially he made a separate room for Prakash of Guru Granth Sahib Ji adjoining to his house, a tall Nishan Sahib was also placed as the symbol of Khalsa, then the worship continued. At that time there was no Gurdwara in between Bilaspur and Tata, so that the Sikh Sangat of Raigarh, Sambalpur, Jharsuguda, Rajgangpur, Chakradharpur were used to come for celebration of various Gurburab time to time.

The place had become popular for its natural glory and realised of having a Gurdwara although the place was very small. Also, many Sikhs made their way to Garposh for earning wages. By the combined efforts of all those Sikh people a mud house was made and the Almighty God Waheguru Ji took himself in that place and the small mud house became the Shri Guru Singh Sabha in 1895. On 30th of December in the year 1916, Sardar Basant Singh left for heavenly abode. His younger brother late Sardar Bhagat Singh continued the Seva of Gurdwara Garposh up to 1946 until his last breath. In the same year the construction work of new building for Gurdwara Sahib was going on but due to some unavoidable circumstances the work had to be stopped. In 1950s Sant Kalyan dash came to Garposh.

At that time Lt. Sardar Hazara Singh, S/o – Lt. Sardar Basant Singh was the Sarpanch of Garposh Gram Panchayat under the supervision of Sant Kalyan dash and with the efforts of Late Sardar Labh Singh and others (local people and other Sikhs) finally, the Gurdwara construction work was accomplished in the year 1962. The Sikh population was dependent on forest produce, but in 1964 the jungle has been undertaken by the Govt. Act of corporation, and hence the source of income was lost. Sikhs from this area started moving to other places for

livelihood. Then Sardar Mahijit Singh took the charge of Seva continuously for about 40 years.

Due to lack of proper care, the condition of Gurdwara turned out to be miserable. As a social worker Sardar Mahijit Singh tried his best to improve the Gurdwara's condition. Local M.L.A. Shri Hemanand Biswal and Shri Rajendra Chhatria donated their M.L.A. lad time to time. Local contribution also made a part in it.

As Sardar Mahijit Singh became old, myself Jasbir Singh Virdi took the charge of Gurdwara and since 2009 I am giving my Seva towards Gurdwara regularly.

As a teacher in Guru Nanak Khalsa High School under the guidance of Gurdwara Shri Guru Singh Sabha Rourkela, all types of help for me in my efforts are made possible with the help of Gurdwara Shri Guru Singh Sabha, Rourkela”.

Next comes the History of Gurdwara Sahib stationed at Sungadia situated at Baripada of Mayurbhanj District. The legend prevails that a Gur Sikh from Punjab was an expert fortune teller and his predictions had helped the Royal King of Mayurbhanj in innumerable stances. Impressed by the bow to earth nature, the personality and the Seva Bhaav of this Gur Sikh, the king donated several acres of land for the construction of Gurdwara. At present, the descendant of this Gur Sikh – Sardar Mangat Singh and his family are maintaining this hundred years old Sikh Heritage.

I was fortunate to recognize the historicity of this place with the assistance of my dearest Sardar Surjit Singh Ji and Pappu Veer Ji who are acknowledged to be the members of Principal Gurdwara of Mayurbhanj District, entitled “Gurdwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha, Baripada”. These two Gur Sikhs are performing innumerable Seva in the Gurdwara Sahib strictly according to Gurmat Maryada for which, Daas Abinash Mahapatra is and will remain ever obliged to them.

While accessing the Sikh Historical Records pertaining to this state in Dam Dami Taksal, I got to discern about Bhai Gurmukh Singh Ji. Years past, there used to be a Pious Odia Man who had a profound attachment towards the Sikh religion since his childhood. This attachment led him to take the Holy Amrit and hence got transformed into an Amritdhari Sikh named Bhai Gurmukh Singh. His acceptance of Sikh Religion went in contradiction of his family with an exception to his sister-in-law and hence they decided to snatch his property and cut off his Kesh on a suitable instance.

Being his well-wisher, his sister-in-law enlightened him regarding this strategy. Offered him all her jewelry, she insisted him to flee away as his acceptance of Sikhi was perilous in his residence. On a fine morning, Bhai Gurmukh Singh Ji arrived at Dam Dami Taksal. The Sewaadar at first didn't permit him from entering into the premises. Lo and Behold! All of a sudden comes running a Sikh instigating,

“He is our own man. Let him come”.

Since he came in contact with the devout Sikh Saints, he got significantly ardent to

Sant Giani Gurbachchan Singh Ji. The saint and his adherent had great time in reciting the Bani from Satguru Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Maharaj and Shri Dasam Granth Sahib Ji. On an instance, Sant Giani Gurbachchan Singh Ji enquired Bhai Gurmukh Singh Ji,

“You have provided relentless service to me. Ask for what you want and you will be granted for sure without any hesitation”.

Bhai Gurmukh Singh Ji replied,

“Sant Ji, you have never parted me for a single moment and that is a blessing for me. Hence, when you depart for Heavenly Abode, please do bless me to accompany you even there. This is my only wish”.

Sant Giani Gurbachchan Singh Ji's joys knew no bounds. He enfolded Bhai Gurmukh Singh Ji and uttered,

“You are blessed. May Waheguru Ji bestow His blessings upon you”.

Few days surpassed and Sant Giani Gurbachchan Singh Ji left his mortal. Bhai Gurmukh Singh Ji couldn't bear this instance and was found bowled over. The cremation (Antim Sanskar) was about to commence but Bhai Gurmukh Singh Ji with ceaseless tears in his eyes hold the body of Sant Giani Gurbachchan Singh Ji tight. He was pulled by other Sevadaars but the outcome was fuss. Bhai Gurmukh Singh Ji recited a Bani and jumped into the fire. Sant Gyani Baba Kartar Singh Ji and other saints were also present during this scenario. They all started blowing Jaikaara. The life and ideals of Bhai Gurmukh Singh Ji will always be a role model for the Sikhs of Odisha.

Post to the establishments of the Sikh Shrines and Significant Dharam Prachar in Odisha, the influence of Sikh Religion got profound among the local inhabitants to such an extent that the eminent personalities and Authors began to propagate the Sikh Religion in every corner of the State to share the mission of Love and Humanity as preached by our Sikh Gurus –

1. Madhusudan Rao (1853-1912) used to speak of Sikhism at its meetings and never hesitated to point out the importance of Sikh History for society.
2. 2. Guru Gobinda Singha in Odia was the first Sikh Literature to be published in Odia around 1934 by Saraswat Bhandar, Cuttack.
3. A second Sikh Literature - Guru Gobinda Singha was published in Odia around 1966 by Guru Gobind Singh Foundation and was distributed by Grantha Mandir, Cuttack.
4. In 1973, a book entitled Nanak Baani in Odia was published by National Book Trust, India.
5. Saheed Bhagat Singh in Odia was published in 1977 by M/s. Jagannath Ratha Publishers, Cuttack.

Jayamangal Rath in 1928 was one of the greatest followers of Guru Gobind Singh. He proclaimed in a Public Platform –

"Hordes of new people joined the new Sikh community. Those deprived of social rights, those persecuted and despised in society, those tortured by the Muslims and those who were given to banditry and warlike pursuits embraced Sikhism."

Though Jagannath Puri being deeply connected to the Sikh History, even after 500 years, there could not be edifice of any Sikh Gurdwara. It was a spinning point in the Sikh History of Odisha when Sant Baba Samsher Singh Ji visited Jagannath Puri and was chockfull with grief on seeing the poorest condition of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's Bauli Sahib.

It was only Baba Ji and his worth son (Su – Putra) – Bhai Sahib Bhai Jagdeep Singh Ji who unaided confronted countless hurdles and with the blessings of Waheguru Ji, the Sadh Sangat began to join them. Baba Ji purchased a plot of land in Balia Panda near the sea shore. As it was next to impossible to get Gurdwara Aarti Sahib constructed at the exact spot where Guruji recited Aarti in the temple premises, it was realized that a memory (Yadgar) of Aarti Sahib must be established in Jagannath Puri. Hence, keeping in view this fact, the matter was put forth in front of Jathedar Shri Akal Takhat sahib and Jathedar Takhat Shri Har Mandir Ji, Patna Sahib.

Two Hukumnamas were issued by the Jathedars stating that Baba Ji will construct Gurdwara Aarti Sahib, regulate Gur Maryada, administer the daily rituals, Seva Sambhal and Langar and also can fight legally to protect and preserve the ruining Sikh Heritages of Odisha. With the grace of Guru Pita, Baba Ji constructed Gurdwara Shri Aarti Sahib within a stipulated period of 1 year.

Among the five beloveds of Dashmesh Pita Satguru Dhan Dhan Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj, the third Pyara – Bhai Himmat Singh Ji was from Jagannath Puri. But there was no memory of Bhai Himmat Singh Ji in entire Odisha when Baba Ji arrived Jagannath Puri. Hence, after construction of Gurdwara Shri Aarti Sahib, Baba Ji decided to construct a memorial commemorating Bhai Himmat Singh Ji.

With the moral support and love of the Sadh Sangat and Nanak Naam Levan Sangat, Baba Ji constructed Bhai Himmat Singh Memorial Children's Park just in front of Gurdwara Shri Aarti Sahib. At present, Gurdwara Shri Aarti Sahib has four storied edifices and it is the only distinctive Gurdwara in the entire globe which is located on the sea shore.

Apart being a historically important Gurdwara, it is the headquarters of Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Religious and Charitable Trust which has been administering all the Sikh heritages in Jagannath Puri and is involved in many social activities since the past 14 years. Even the historical Bauli Matth about which we have discussed earlier in the book, was in a dilapidated condition.

The Matth was under the control of Udaasin Mahant even hundreds of years after the Prakash of Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. The Sikh Maryada was not regularised in this

Matth and it was a great grief for the Sikh Panth. But after innumerable efforts, on January 1st, 2019, the Govt. of Odisha passed an historical order stating to regularise the Sikh Code of Conduct in Bauli Matth and the administration, daily rituals and Seva will be done by Sant Baba Samsheer Singh Ji.

Before handing over the charge, the Govt. of Odisha had conducted an eight months long enquiry of all the Sikh Organisations prevailing in Odisha. Conclusively, the Govt. of Odisha realized that it is only Sant Baba Samsheer Singh Ji who is praiseworthy to get the charge of re- establishing the lost Sikh Conduct in the Historical Bauli Sahib of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj. It was a great victory for the Sikh Panth after hundreds of years. Now, the Sikh Code has been regularised and is being smoothly administered under the patronage of Sant Baba Samsheer Singh Ji. The readers of this book must certainly visit the above-mentioned places to realise the essence of Sikh Religion pertaining to the state of Odisha and must coordinate for Dharam Parchar Activities.



CHAPTER - VI

The Sikh History of Arunachal Pradesh



GURDWARA SAHIB AT MENCHUKA (ARUNACHAL PRADESH)



Shri Ghan Shyam Meena (IAS)
Commissioner – Research & Library,
Directorate of Research, Department of Cultural Affairs,
Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh.

Tracing the footprints of Indian History, one can mark the fact that it is exactly 550 years ago that the Godly Saint – Guru Nanak Dev Ji descended on Earth in the form of a Messiah to destroy the prevalent social evils and establish a platform to spread the message of love, humanity and equality by demolishing the walls of hatred, existing religious malpractices, caste and creed.

Guru Nanak Dev established this platform by spiritual journeys to all the four directions of this globe which is termed as Udasis in Sikh Etymology. Each act of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, each of His words, in short to say, His entire life is itself a teaching to the entire mankind. Producing documentaries on the spiritual journeys is not only a vast treasure for the Sikh Religion but also a great armament for the entire mankind to destroy the negativities of the inner self and to construct a good moral character by implementing the essence of readings in daily life.

The book entitled “The Sikh History of Arunachal Pradesh” is written by a young author Mr. Abinash Mahapatra hailing from the state of Odisha and it was a delightful experience for me to go through his manuscript which gives a detailed account of the travels of Guru Nanak Dev Ji along with the places associated to Him, the morals He preached and the reverence of local populace as well as Lama which is prevalent till date. It is hence proved that the author has taken much pains for the research and has portrayed an authentic depiction of Sikh History pertaining to this region. Mr. Sagar Singh Kalsi (IPS), serving as the Superintendent of Police at Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh has verified this book and is also of the same opinion that there is no doubt, it is an extensive noble deed by the young author in producing such a documentary on Sikh History pertaining to the state of Arunachal Pradesh, India.

In this year, i.e. 2019, the entire world is celebrating the 550th Birth Anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev Ji and hence, production such noble literatures by Abinash is not only a blessing for the Sikh Religion but also will spread the message of Guru Nanak Dev Ji throughout the globe. I convey my best wishes and pray for his bright future.

G.S. Meena

An Introduction to Arunachal Pradesh Sikh History

If I accept Sikhism from my heart and mind by taking up a mission in spreading it to each corner of the universe without the knowledge of past history, origin, importance and culture, then I am a tree without having roots. I am not the maker of Sikh History rather study of Sikh History, the greatness of my Sikh Gurus and the morals I learn from their lives gives me at least a pinch of influence that I can be a human being in today's polluted society.

Penning down the Sikh History pertaining to various places across the globe, not only enhances the knowledge of historians or individuals, it helps in building the moral character of a person. The more we seek moral lessons in our lives, the more we are prepared to make this earth a beautiful place to live in.

Arunachal Pradesh among the 28 states of India is a diverged state with primarily Donyipolo, Buddhists and others giving observance to embellished flora, fauna and Monasteries. This mainland state in India is the place which gets the first vision of Sunrise. But the Sikh Antiquity and the local Buddhists awe towards Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji endured obscured for virtually centuries.

Apart from Monasteries and few Hindu Shrines being known, the Sikh Shrines were wholly inaccessible not only from the local populaces but also from the superficial states. According to the ancient history, this state was under the jurisdiction of Assam till the independence.

In Janam Sakhi, the state of Assam treasures the appellation of Kamrup Desh. After the partition of Assam and establishment of newly state authorized Arunachal Pradesh in 1987, only few places visited by Satguru Shri Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji came into the state's province. If a detailed investigation is done on Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's footprints, it can be inveterate that Satguru Shri Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji travelled thrice to and from the state.

Once while going to Tibet from Tawang, secondly while returning from Tibet to Mechuka and thirdly travelling to Tibet again and conveying some residents to be settled in Mechuka. If a detailed consecutive mapping is done, the chronology of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's travel in Arunachal Pradesh will be of the following custom –

- Tawang
- Mechuka
- Lohit

This book of mine entitled The Sikh History of Arunachal Pradesh not only emphasizes on the visit of Satguru Shri Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji in this state but also the devotion of local residents and the Buddhist Lamas (Local Rinpoche) who have played and are playing a chief protagonist in preserving the Sikh Cult in the state of Arunachal

Pradesh. According to Janam Sakhis, Guru Sahib held spiritual debate (Gosht) with the local Rinpoches.

This state holds a great significance in my life as I have pursued my graduation in B. Sc. Zoology from Himalayan University stationed at Itanagar. This research work of mine is personal visit to all the above-mentioned places to trace the visits of Satguru Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj.

I extend my special gratitude to Hon. Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh, Sri Ghan Shyam Meena Ji (IAS) – Commissioner, Directorate of Research (Dept. of Cultural Affairs), Sardar Sagar Singh Kalsi Ji (IPS) – Superintendent of Police, Tawang and all the Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee Members of Arunachal Pradesh who have authenticated and verified this work of mine.

The Sikh History of Arunachal Pradesh

Satguru Shri Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji treaded into Arunachal Pradesh while going to Tibet. Tawang is the foremost place which was visited by Satguru Shri Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji in Arunachal Pradesh. It is Bangachangsa which is a high-altitude lake district of Tawang from where Satguru Shri Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji started His third spiritual journey (Teesri Udasi) out of the four.

Passing through the serene and beautiful lake, Satguru Shri Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji visited a famous monastery in Tawang and proceeded to Tibet through the same mountainous way taken by Dalai Lama. Local belief too exists that there was a painting of Satguru Shri Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji in Tawang Monastery which the Lamas used to worship.

At present, there exists a Gurdwara named Teesri Udasi Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Gurdwara Sahib on the way from Tawang town to Tsung star Lake. It is at a height of 14500 feet from the ground level and the Gurdwara is in a cave situated about 200 meters above it.

While returning from Lhasa, Tibet, Satguru Shri Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji halted at Pemoshubu, Mechuka in Arunachal Pradesh, India. Satguru Shri Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji visited Mechuka twice. The Lamas of this region consider Satguru Shri Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji as Rinpoche (an honorific title used by Buddhists in high regard of a religious head) and call Him Nanak Lama (Lama is a reverential title for a Religious teacher in Buddhist Religion).

At Pemoshubu, there is a hill at Segong Dorgillong on top of which existed a cave and a huge boulder. According to the Lamas, Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji meditated under this boulder which holds the dimension 20 feet length*20 feet breadth*30 feet height which leaned towards east.

During meditation, Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji was attacked by a bear. In order to protect Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the huge boulder lifted Him up and took Him on its lap. The upliftment was 10 feet high. The bear was unsuccessful in its attempt. The boulder has etched marks of two bodies – one of a bigger man and the other of a smaller man.

The bigger mark is of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and smaller one is of Bhai Mardana. The marks of turban, shoulders and torso are so prominent that one can proclaim they are naturally hewn. The Lamas ring bells, chant hymns, offer new white cloth flag especially in the last week of March month which they believe is the period when Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji visited this region. Even a fair is organized in this memory.

Close to the boulder, there used to be a cave. Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji passed through this cave to have bath in the rivulet of Bamchu River. Till date, belief exists that only a person with clear heart can pass through the cave and reach near the rivulet.

It does not matter the thinness or thickness of a person. On reaching the rivulet, one can see it is full of white and black pebbles which are believed to be in the rivulet since Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's period.

The local belief exists that a decision is sought from Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and a pebble is picked from the rivulet. If a white pebble comes up, then its Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's surety and if it is a black pebble, then its Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's denial.

According to the local traditions, the Lamas never permit the diseased to take medicines at first. Initially, they create an idol of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji with rice and butter, burn incense sticks, utter Nanak name, utter their local prayer and then permit the diseased to take medicine.

The local denizens pose great faith and reverence for Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji. Despite being a historical and religiously significant spot for the Sikhs, there was not a single Gurdwara here. It was with the earnest efforts of Major Devender Singh Grewal and Subedar Surat Singh from Haryana who were stationed at an army unit near Mechuka that a Gurdwara was built in this region. With great difficulty and various means of transport, they could collect the materials and got a Gurdwara built here around 1980s.

The Gurdwara is named as Gurdwara Tap Asthan Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji which exists in the same place where Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji meditated. The boulder and photographs of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji are preserved in this Gurdwara. From Mechuka, Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji again went to Southern Tibet from where He brought the local residents and made them to settle in Mechuka. From Mechuka, Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji went to Parshuram Kund from where He proceeded to Assam.

From Mechuka, Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji treading through Gelling and Tuting reached Parshuram Kund which is the key originator of Lohit River. Lohit River is the main tributary of Brahmaputra River in India. This place also connotes to be the meeting place of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and Srimanta Sankar Dev (A Vaishnava poet, saint and playwright from Assam). It was the time of Makar Sankranti and the annual fair was well organized.

Srimanta Sankar Dev was delivering sermons to the crowd. In the meanwhile, Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji started singing Shabad and Bhai Mardana played the Rabab. Srimanta Sankar Dev was deeply considerate on listening to Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji. Srimanta Sankar Dev stood and bowed to Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji. He got devoted to Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and attended to His Shabads and discourses.

Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji taught him the essence of the True Lord and instigated him to sing the glories of the Supreme Lord. Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and Srimanta Sankar departed from Parshuram Kund and started proceeding towards

Tinsukia, the present-day Assam. This history is still depicted in the annual fair organized during Makar Sankranti.

Tracing the Sikh establishments of this state, one can discover the Gurdwara positioned in Hapoli Road, Ziro Taluka of lower Subansiri District. Much less is known about the historicity of this Gurdwara. Though not historical, but this Gurdwara can be considered as historically important. This Gurdwara's foundation stone was laid by Lt. Col. Karamjit Singh of 60 Engineers Regiment on 5th of August, 1969.

Possibly, this would be the first Sikh Gurdwara in Arunachal Pradesh but this turned to be the second. Till now, the Gurdwara is administered officially and the daily rituals are in continuation. Sikhs and devoted personalities irrespective of their religion and social barriers do visit this shrine and offer their prayers.

Being non historical, the Gurdwara Sahib – Gurdwara Singh Sabha belongs to the twin city of Arunachal Pradesh. The Gurdwara is located in a scenic town based on the foothills of Himalayas which is the only Gurdwara located within 10 km radius of capital city named Itanagar. The Gurdwara is stationed on NH 415 opposite to general hospital. The Rehat is well maintained and the rituals of the Shrine are well executed by the Granthis and Sevadaars.

The officiating function of this Gurdwara is well administered for which the Gurdwara has also been honoured by the Governor and other state government officials several times. Guru ka Langar and celebration of various Sikh festivals are marked here. The magnificent Gurdwara of the twin city is also an abode to many Sikhs and tourists visiting this spot.

Ensuing towards Pasighat of this state, one can mark Gurdwara Guru Nanak Dev Ji Sabha, one of the oldest Gurdwara established in the state around the year 1967, which has completed 5 decades with the strenuous of or precursor & grace of Almighty and Love & Affection of the district administration and the beloved local populace. The district administration and the locals of the state have always been supportive and the Gurdwara Sahib – Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Sabha has withstood the test of time.

Empathetic thankfulness to the Hon. Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh, Sri Ghan Shyam Meena Ji (IAS) – Commissioner, Directorate of Research (Dept. of Cultural Affairs), Sardar Sagar Singh Kalsi Ji (IPS) – Superintendent of Police, Tawang and all the Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee Members of Arunachal Pradesh for authenticating my research work based on this state.



CHAPTER - VII

The Sikh History of Sikkim



SATGURU SRI GURU NANAK DEV JI MAHARAJ



Gurdwara Sri Guru Dang Maar Sahib, Sikkim (North East India)

An Introduction to The Sikkim Sikh History

The land of pristine and mystic beauty, the garden of apples and the polychromatic scenic beauty compiles to entitle a state – Sikkim. A terrestrial of melodramatic silhouettes, Rocky Peaks, cavernous valleys and impenetrable forestry consorting with rampant rivers, lakes and water falls to create a visual feast in this Buddhist dominating state was prosperous to osculate the Holy Feet of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj when He ensued in this state during His spiritual journey (Udasi).

Generally, when the Sikh History pertaining to this state is investigated, then only Chungthang or Gurudongmar is focussed. There were countable number of 100 places related to Guruji in this state but I could make out only 20 places as per the declaration of the Head Lama of Lachung Monastery. In these 20 places, there is only a single Sikh Gurdwara in Chungthang entitled as Gurdwara Shri Guru Nanak Lama.

The vast Sikh History connoting to this state has been concealed since long and thus are the chronological sequence of places mentioned by the Head Lama of Lachung Monastery which were visited by Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj in the Indian state of Sikkim –

1. Chorten – Nyima – La
2. Muguthang
3. Cheedang
4. Sherang
5. Culang
6. Lawu Gompha
7. Gurudongmar
8. Gnalung
9. Thangu
10. Lachen
11. Munshithang
12. Chungthang
13. Phodong
14. Gangtok
15. Lachung
16. Yumthang
17. Yoksom
18. Pyakochin

19. Ghorala

20. Pharidzong

This book entitled “The Sikh History of Sikkim” tries to pitch nimble on every solitary illustration by following the Trails of Guru Sahib in a sequential order and the post periods after Guru Sahib’s departure. In short to say, this work of mine tries to bring out every unfolded facet of the Sikh Establishment in this state and the devotion of the locals towards Guruji which is evidently till date.

There were countable number of 100 places and memories related to Guruji in this state but in due course of time by what means the negligence and obliviousness distorted the magnificent Sikh Heritages in this region are discussed in this work. Sardar Yadvinder Singh of Gurdwara Guru Nanak Lama, Chungthang and the Head Lama of Lachen Monastery have supported me with enormous resources and support while I was researching on the Sikh History of this place.

The Sikh History of Sikkim

I hark back to a fine luminous morning when I stepped into this state and I was in a panic with superlative eagerness to glance the belongings of My Master – Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj as I had read about His visits to this Monastery. I was earnestly waiting for someone and thus comes one of the Lama of this monastery who revealed me the inscribed particulars.

A profound and comprehensive study of the footprints of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj put forward that Guruji sauntered into the state of Sikkim through the Chorten – Nyima – La. The picturesque attractiveness captivated Guruji and out of euphoria, He disintegrated His chaplet and proliferated the beads. The places where these beads fell, small lakes got escalated. Following to Chorten – Nyima – La, Guruji's ensuing stopping place was Muguthang Valley.

The Ethnic History prevails that Guruji on stepping into this valley, sat on the brink of a lake, instructed Bhai Mardana to tune the Rabab and in full swing intoned the Holy Shabad. The local populace on hearing the melodious voice of Guruji emanated and sought His blessings. The Natives pleaded near Guruji –

“Holy Master! Two anthropophagi (a male and a female) have made this lake their dwelling. This lake mischievous sprite utterly gulps hominids. Hence out of fear, we are facing drought of water for drinking and domiciliary happenings”.

Hearing their entreaties, Guruji winched up a colossal sarsen and pitched it towards the lake. Apprehensive of bereavement, the whizzes came into nimble and pursued clemency. The eternal compassionate Master absolved them, clasped the declining sarsen aided with a hawser and commanded them to remain abstain from Human Flesh. Guruji mandated those impish sprites to recite the name of the True Lord – Shri Waheguru Ji.

From Muguthang Valley, Guru Sahib ensued towards Cheedang. Being enchanted by the picturesque attractiveness, here Guruji rested across a sarsen where His palm inscriptions can still be stared at. Guruji blessed this land as Contented Beguile and uttered “Ki Dang” (What a Flabbergast!) Crossing from Sherang, Culang and Lawu Gompha, Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj set foot into Gurudongmar. It was winter and the temperature was most prone to quivering. The lake too was frozen and the ice was apparent to a milky white crystal ground. Guruji was resting on the brink of the lake and singing Shabad where a horde of Yak Breeders approached Guruji and pleaded for three causes –

“Revered Master! Due to Spartan cold, the lakes in this zone gets iced up and hence we face drought of water. Secondly, the height of this zone above sea level has exaggerated our masculinity. Thirdly, in arrears to the above pointed out

**grounds, our strength is also affected. The Saviour of the Universe! We beseech
You Master, please hoar us from these complications”.**

Heeding to their pleas, the merciful master with His walking stick hit the frozen lake and thus a portion of ice melted and uttered –

“Those who guzzle water from this lake will realise brawn and masculinity”.

The Gurdwara Sahib at Gurudongmar has also been converted into a “Sarv Dharm Sthal” and the Nishan Sahib as well as the Khalsa Khanda Inscriptions in the premises have been erased and even the presence Satguru Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Maharaj has been removed.

Sauntering from Gurudongmar, Guruji proceeded towards Gnalung. Here Guruji’s hand marks can still be eyed on a giant sarsen. The benevolent Master’s next destination was Thangu. Here Guruji rested under a sarsen and sang some Shabad. The locals crammed near Guruji as swarm of bees and some Buddhist Lamas had spiritual debate (Siddh Gosht) with Him. At last, the Lamas capitulated and declared Guruji their Rinpoche. When Guruji was almost all set to set out from Thangu, the locals as well as the Lamas pleaded Guruji –

**“O Master! Gratify to vouchsafe us any of Your monogram which we will bestow
our adulation as remembrance of Your visit to our native land”.**

The Merciful Master heeded to their prayers and stood on the sarsen beneath which He rested and the footprints of Guruji got inscribed on them. The locals and the Buddhist Lamas raised Devout Shrine and there were well-looked-after 1002 idols of Guruji.

From Thangu, Guruji moseyed towards Lachen. The recognition of Guruji as Rinpoche by the locals and the lamas had before now binged like wild fire and thus when Guruji reached Lachen, He was warmly welcomed by the Lachen Gompha Lamas and the locals. The Lama continued, at present, the Lachen Gompha has revamped into a Chorten. All of a sudden, the Lama curbs his words and stands with head hooked.

I was absolutely unaware of what he was doing and when I eyed behind, there was standing a tall man with a resplendent glow on his face. When I asked the Lama about his identity, he whispered in my ears “He is our Chief Lama”. I assumed of gaining more information about the visits of My Master and the places associated to Him from the Head Lama. Post to a couple of moments conversation, the Head Lama himself uttered the following lines apropos Guruji –

**“Here Guru Rinpoche is paid homage by me and my juniors to who is widely
known as Guru Nanak. Guru Rinpoche came here from Tibet. He abetted the
Tibetan Sovereign in prolonging the Sakya Monastery in honour of which the
Hon. Sovereign perked Him with a Royal Robe. We have the chronicles of Guru
Rinpoche’s visit to Tibet and Sikkim in our Tibetan Religious Books. He also left**

His water vessel (Kamandal) as an incentive to the locals and the sarsen on which Guru Rinpoche emblazoned His footprints was rescued from the river Teesta River by us. Till date, we are the custodians of all these objects of Guru Rinpoche. Manifestation of a Hot Spring by Guru Rinpoche at Munshithang adjacent to Jaure Bridge is still prevalent.

Ambling from Tibet, Guru Rinpoche entered Sikkim from Chorten – Nyima – La and visited Muguthang, Cheedang, Sherang, Culang, Lawu Gompha, Gurudongmar, Gnalung, Thangu, Lachen, Munshithang, Chungthang, Phodong, Yumthang and finally Yoksom which serves as a border of Bhutan. In short to say, the places commemorating Guru Rinpoche’s visit to Sikkim exceeds more than hundred in numerals”.

Proceeding from Lachen, Guruji sauntered towards south, reached Munshithang and sat at a place adjacent to present day Jaure Bridge. Here Guruji spawned a thermal spring and His foot prints can still be traced in this region. Chungthang was the subsequent place after Munshithang where Guruji set His feet. Sardar Yadvinder Singh of Chungthang shared the inscribed particulars of Guruji’s visit to this place. Guruji set under a colossal sarsen measuring 20 feet each in height and diameter. Just adjacent to this gigantic sarsen, there prevailed an afreet to be existent on a hill.

To illustrate his hegemony, he hurled a substantial shingle on Guruji. It was only with His walking stick, Guruji froze that shingle and climbed on it. Seeing such manifestation of Guruji, the devil fell at Guruji’s feet and sought mercy. The Ever-Lenient Master exonerated and directed him to do Naam Simran. Guruji’s walking stick though froze the shingle got wedged plumb which procured the silhouette of a tree.

One of the local was an elderly woman who approached to Guruji and implored –

“The dearth of water has waged me much troubles. Compassionate Master! My age is not admiring me to hike and get down in demand to fetch water for sustenance. Bless me Master with a resource of water to slake my thirst.”

The Munificent Master heeding to her petitions, scratched one side of the shingle on which He was sedentary and till date, a brook of fresh water is flowing ceaselessly thereof. Post to His discourses, Guruji unwrapped his foodstuff comprising rice crammed in banana foliage. Seeing the delicacy, the locals implored –

“Master! There is no crop growing of paddy or banana in our province. Please consecrate us with these.”

Guruji consumed the whole of the wrapped foodstuff leaving behind a few. He stood on the shingle, dispersed the remnants of the eaten food and also buried some banana leaves under the shingle. Post to this doing, Guruji uttered –

“This will be the only valley in the domain where Banana and Paddy Agriculture will be eyed by the civilisation.”

According to the native dogmas, Guruji has submerged one of His handwritten manuscript and a walking stick under the same shingle and has commanded one of His worthy disciples will be able to discover them by displacing the shingle. The entire state being utmost significant in Sikh History since the visit of Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj, there is only a single Sikh Gurdwara in this place entitled as Gurdwara Shri Guru Nanak Lama where even today, one can eye the huge shingle where Guruji's footprints are inscribed, the brook of fresh water is still oozing from the shingle and Guruji's stick which got wedged plumb has taken the shape of a magnificent tree in the Gurdwara Premises.

As Guruji had commanded that Chungthang will be the only region where paddy and banana agriculture will be noticed and had dispersed His food remnants, till date the paddy and banana cultivations are eyed in this region just adjacent to the Gurdwara Sahib. From Chungthang, Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji sauntered to Phodong. Here a magnificent monastery is venerated in the memory of Guruji's visit. From Phodong, Guruji moseyed to Rumtek Monastery in Sikkim and then returned to Chungthang. This marks second visit of Guruji to Chungthang.

Strolling from Chungthang, Guruji ensued towards Lachung Monastery where befallen countable numbers of canvases signifying Satguru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's visit to this region. Drifting from Lachung, Guruji ensued towards Yumthang. The inhabitants of this region were untidy as they on no occasion took bath for the pretext of the icy weather. Guruji detached a grit and thus babbled a hot spring. Guruji initiated them to have steady bath and ensure Naam Simran.

Sauntering from Yumthang, Guruji entered Yoksom and reached Pyakochin. In this region just beneath the Khora La Bridge, there exists a stone with an inscription in script which corroborates Guruji's visit. Traversing through Ghorala, Guruji reached Pharidzong and this marks as the last place of Guruji's visit to this state.



CHAPTER - VIII

The Sikh History of Andaman & Nikoban



**GURDWARA SARDAR DIWAN SINGH KALEPANI
(ANDAMAN & NICOBAR ISLANDS)**



A Rare Photograph of Dr. Diwan Singh Kalepani & his Family preserved at Dr. Diwan Singh Kalepani Museum.

An Introduction to The Sikh History of this Province

The place where the seasons start out with monsoon thus, offering a perfect break from the harsh sun, a land engulfed with glistening clean white sand beaches, wide shorelines and crystal blue waters. A hill range extending from Myanmar to Indonesia, these picturesque undulating islands, islets numbering around 836, are covered with dense rain-fed, damp and evergreen forests and endless varieties of exotic flora and fauna thus, engulfing and trapping the hearts of the people in the abode of ecstasy, making them realize the heavenly bliss.

Yes, the readers of this book, my words are directing you towards the Union Territory of Andaman & Nicobar Islands. Although none of our Sikh Gurus visited this portion of the country, but a profound base of the Khalsa Raj persists in this province which has been concealed since long from the conscience of the Sikhs prevailing worldwide. There persists no historical context pertaining to the presence of Sikhs in this region till Dr. Diwan Singh Kalepani arrives and instils the real Gur Khalsa essence among the masses of Andaman on whose memory is commemorated a Guru Ghar.

Apart from this Guru Ghar in the Union Territory of Andaman, entitled “Gurdwara Dr. Diwan Singh Sahid” we have three more Guru Ghar entitled as “The Police Gurdwara”, “The MES Gurdwara” & “Gurdwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha” and surprisingly, here one can notice a road entitled “Dashmesh Nagar” which has been named after Kalgidhar Patshah Sahib Sri Guru Gobind Singh Maharaj.

Even, in the Aberdeen Bazar, one can find “Sahid Dr. Diwan Singh Statue” built in the honour to commemorate his patriotism and noble deeds. Just adjacent to Gurdwara Dr. Diwan Singh Sahid, one can see “Khalsa Public School” which marks the only Sikh Educational Institution which is actively and relentlessly working for the betterment of this region and establishing the values of Sikh Universalism.

It is noteworthy that the local govt., the administrative departments as well as the local residents have bestowed their infinite love and support towards the Sikhs residing here. I extend my earnest gratitude to Dr. Angel Bhati Chauhan (Director (IP&T), Directorate of IP & T), Gyani Satnam Singh (Head Granthi of Gurdwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha) & Gyani Sikander Singh (Head Granthi of MES Gurdwara) who have provided me enough guidance and information for a profound research pertaining to this region.

The Sikh History of Andaman & Nicobar Islands

The instance when someone enters the cellular jail of Andaman & Nicobar Islands which stands as the live example of India's struggle for acquiring independence and justice, the walls of this jail which persists as the eyewitness of heavy & rude tortures imposed on the Patriotic Indians and when someone elaborates as well as demonstrates this portion of the least explored history of struggle for independence, it goes unaccomplished if that individual doesn't speak of Dr. Diwan Singh Kalepani. His greatness, noble deeds and words still echoes between the walls of this void prison.

An incomparable great martyr who sacrificed everything for the sake of his nation fighting for justice, rights and truthfulness, Dr. Diwan Singh Kalepani was born to Sardar Sundar Singh Ji & Bibi Inder Kaur Ji on 22nd of May, 1897 as their only son in the Galotia Pind of Sialkot District, West Punjab (the contemporary Pakistan). Dr. Diwan Singh lost his parents at his infancy age of 2 years and was concerned by his grandmother and uncle Sardar Sohan Singh Ji.

For his primary education, Dr. Diwan Singh Kalepani was granted admission in Galotia Kala Primary School which was 4 miles away from his abode. Soon he accomplished his 5th grade, he was transferred to Scotch Mission School stationed at Daska where he continued his education till 8th grade, post to which he was transferred to the then newly opened Khalsa High School where he pursued his matriculation studies and was sent to Agra Medical School to obtain his degree for medical education.

To everyone's Lo & Behold! Within one month of his degree achievement, Dr. Diwan Singh Kalepani was appointed as a medical officer at Rawalpindi Military Hospital. During his tenure of service, he was posted in many regions of India but his posting to Dagshai, Himachal Pradesh is considered to be a turning point in his life where he was engulfed in humanity thought process and commenced spreading awareness among the masses through some of his writings/poems which echoed in the aura and ignited the populaces where he persisted.

These scenarios are portrayals/imageries of the stances connoting to the epoch of December 1921 when Prince of Wales had just returned to India. On heeding to such writings/poems of Dr. Diwan Singh Kalepani who was too a Govt. Employee, it was excruciating for the Prince of Wales to issue an arrest warrant against him and further legal actions were imposed on Dr. Diwan Singh at Kasauli.

The Govt. though lost the case, a treacherous game was played by the govt. by performing certain modifications in the order leading to which he was arrested and was sent to Rangoon, Burma. From there, he was transferred to Cellular Jail of Andamans as a Medical Officer (Doctor) where he devoted his service in alleviating the suffering of the convicts, who passed their days in grinding poverty. He made successful experiments in educating them and embarked on meaningful social reforms and championed the cause of downtrodden. For his relentless and selfless service and his love for the nation as well as its residents, Dr. Diwan Singh was declared as the Director

of Health Dept. as well as the President of Indian Independence League in the Andamans. Mrs. Indira Bal, his daughter shares her words,

“My father used to serve as a doctor in the Cellular Jail. He was so humble that once a British officer hit a squirrel with a stone and my father started enquiring the officer pertaining to cause of hitting an innocent animal heeding to which the officers to decide to transfer my father Dr. Diwan Singh for his humble nature to such a superlative extent.”

During World War II, the Japanese occupied the Andaman Islands. Dr. Diwan Singh raised his voice against the rape and other atrocities committed by the Nippon occupiers. Orders of his arrest were issued on 23rd October, 1943 and this, he was arrested. He was taken to and lodged in one of the cells of the same cellular jail of which, ironically enough, he previously held charge as the Medical Officer.

On entering the jail, he was jeered, abused and beaten mercilessly. In a week's time, all of his 2000 associates who were the members of the peace committee, the Seva Samiti and the Punjabi Society were also arrested and huddled in the jail. The Japanese beat and used their water torture, electric shocks, hung them upside down, and burned heaps of paper under their thighs. A very large number of them died, some committed suicide and a few made false confessions to save their lives. They were taken to a remote place, where they were killed and buried.

Ironically, at this unfortunate stance, Subash Chandra Bose was in Port Blair between December 29-31, 1943. He visited the cellular jail where Diwan Singh, the president of the Indian Independence League and hundreds of his companions were languishing, but he did not visit them. After winding, dining and dancing as the honoured guest of the Japanese in the Ross Island he returned to Singapore. Dr. Diwan Singh was brutally tortured for 82 days, a parallel of which is difficult to find in history. He was hung by his hair from the ceiling.

Alternately, his ankles were tied to the ceiling while water was pumped through his mouth and nostrils, he was tied to a stake as his bones were crushed—even electricity was used. Unbelievably, fires were lit under his thighs; nails pulled from his fingers and toes. Strips of flesh were peeled from various parts of his body daily. He was even forced to sit on a charcoal stove. Though they ended his torture by gouging out his eyes the Japanese were never able to break his spirit & finally he died on January 14, 1944.

Dr. Diwan Singh was a poet who penned progressive poetry in blank verses. Almost all of his poems have been compiled and published. A compiled book of his poems named **“Waghde Paani”** was published in 1938 prior to his martyrdom and two books of his poems entitled **“Antim Leharan”** & **“Malhian De Ber”** were published post to his death.

He had four sons and a daughter and it was Sardar Mohinder Singh among them who himself along with his wife Gurdarshan Kaur visited Andaman for the first time in

the year 1968 when both used to serve as professors in Ludhiana. Mrs. Gurdarshan Kaur shares her personal experience through the following words,

“When the ship docked, I saw a sea of people at the port. At first, I thought they had come to see off or receive their loved ones. The moment we stepped out of the ship; people started embracing my husband. Some of them were crying.

It was an unbelievable scene when they reached their accommodation, the house was filled with people. Some were crying and some were narrating stories of Dr Diwan Singh. It was really terrifying for both of us.”

The couple stayed there for two years, listening to tales of the “unsung martyr”. Gurdarshan Kaur adds further,

“It was then Mohinder Singh realised the family had not given the due respect to Dr Diwan Singh. After returning from Andaman, he started collecting documents and material on his father’s life and compiled them into a book — a biography titled A Titan in the Andamans. Next on his agenda was a museum.”

Sardar Mohinder Singh asked his brothers and relatives to contribute in whatever way they could. Dr Diwan Singh’s grandson Gurpartap Singh Dhillon gave a chunk of his land in Siswan, while others pitched in with funds. In 2001, Shaheed Dr Diwan Singh Kalepani Museum came into being, but it was still a work in progress. After Mohinder Singh’s death in 2007, the museum suffered neglect. It was then Mohinder Singh’s daughter, Sonia Dhillon, took it upon herself to take the project forward.

In 2009, she met then Punjab Finance Minister Manpreet Singh Badal. He gave Rs 5 lakh to the museum. With this and a little contribution from relatives and friends, Dr Diwan Singh Kalepani Trust was formed. The money was deposited in a bank in the form of a fixed deposit. A person, who was designing the Virasat-e-Khalsa, was roped in. In 2012, his team started working. As it turned out, Sonia was unhappy with the work. So, she decided to be in charge of designing. She says,

“Just like my father thought about his father, I did it for my father. My father’s dream became my dream”.

She, her mother and two others got down to work in March 2013. For nine months, they worked tirelessly. Gurdarshan Kaur did the translation, while Sonia designed the museum. The museum is divided into five sections. The first section Timeline provides a glimpse into Dr Diwan Singh’s life and, at the same time, mentions about important events in India and abroad at that time.

The other sections are named “Punjabiya”, Faith, Humanism and Nationalism. At the end of the museum, a cell as it would have been in Andamans i.e. with a dimension of 14 ft x 7 ft with a height of 10 ft has been recreated. With all this done, on December 23, 2013, former CM Parkash Singh Badal inaugurated the museum. Commemorating the history of this Gurmukh Martyr – Dr. Diwan Singh Kalepani, a

Gurdwara has been constructed in his name at Andaman & Nicobar Islands and the locals too have erected a commemorative statue in his memory.

Apart from Gurdwara Dr. Diwan Singh Kalepani Sahid, there exists Police gurdwara, MES Gurdwara & Gurdwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha which were constructed much post to the establishment of the Sikhs in this region. The apex body of the Sikh Religion – Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee had also taken necessary steps for the better Sikh Establishments and the Khalsa Raj by furnishing memorandum.

Even necessary requests have been made to rename the roads of Andaman & Nicobar Islands after the names of Sahid Bhagat Singh & Dr. Diwan Singh Kalepani. The Sikhs persisting here celebrate all the Gurmat events strictly pertaining to the Rehat Maryada of Sri Akal Takhat Sahib. The only Sikh Educational Institution “Khalsa Public School” has become a pioneering Sikh Organisation working relentlessly in establishing the universalism of Sikh Religion and Khalsa Raj.

In my last words of the concluding pages of this book “The Sikh History of East India”, I once again extend my earnest gratitude to Param Satkaryog Singh Saab Gyani Kulwant Singh Ji (Jathedar, Takhat Sachkhand Sri Hazur Abchal Nagar Sahib) and the Hon. Members of Gurdwara Management Board, Takhat Sachkhand Sri Hazur Abchal Nagar Sahib who have bestowed upon me their infinite support and guidance while writing this book.



Indian Record

THIS CERTIFICATE IS PROUDLY PRESENTED TO

Abinash Mahapatra

On this Eighteenth Day of September, 2020

*Special Recognition and Commendations are conveyed to **Abinash Mahapatra**, who has achieved amazing feat, performed, adapted, executed and Authored 38 Books on the history & triumph of Sikhs Community with hands-on multiple learning activities, had been appreciated for his versatility in terms of authoring and his spirit to inspire, motivate and encourage the coming generations.*

Abinash Mahapatra, achieved a new “**Indian Record**” from Makalpur, Orissa, and adjudicated by **Dr.GVNRSSS Vara Prasad**, Advocate, Supreme Court of India, at Hyderabad, Telangana, India.



Dr. Vivekananda Babu K

Founder Editor

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D. O. No. /MOSTOLLC.

BHUBANESWAR

Date 15-07-2020

I am extremely glad to know that Shri Abinash Mohapatra, a youth of Balasore district of our State is going to publish his books pertaining to the Sikh History of India and other countries visited by Guru Nanak Dev Ji.

Sikhism is based on the spiritual teachings of Guru Nanak, the first Guru, and the nine Sikh Gurus those succeeded him. Guru Nanak taught that living an "active, creative, and practical life" of "truthfulness, fidelity, self-control and purity" is above the metaphysical truth, and that the ideal man is one who "establishes union with God, knows His Will, and carries out that Will".

I appreciate the hard work of Shri Mohapatra and wish him all success in his future endeavour.

(Jyoti Prakash Panigrahi)



Dr. Opinder Singh Lamba
ADPR CMO Punjab,
2nd Floor, Punjab Civil Secretariat,
Chandigarh, Punjab.
Phone : 0172 – 2740769, 2740713
Email – cmoadpr@gmail.com

Best wishes from Chief Minister of Punjab for your Sikh Literary pursuits.

My dear Abinash Mahapatra Ji,

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Punjab Captain Amarinder Singh has conveyed his best wishes for your extensive work on Sikh history, for all the noble ventures and success for Sikh literary pursuits in future too.

I am hereby directed to acknowledge your communiqué in this regard on behalf of Chief Minister of Punjab.

With profound regards

Yours sincerely,
Dr. Opinder Singh Lamba
Addl. Director (Press)/Chief Minister.

Abinash Mahapatra,
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S. HARPAL SINGH JAGGI
राष्ट्रीय अध्यक्ष
NATIONAL PRESIDENT
पूर्व उपाध्यक्ष उत्तर प्रदेश पंजाबी अकादमी (पूर्व राज्य मंत्री)
Ex- V.C. Uttar Pradesh Punjabi Academy (Ex-State Minister)

Ref. No. AISPM /DO 2020

Date : 28.12.2020

Dear Abinash Mahapatra,

With great pleasure I would like to congratulate you for your sincere efforts & dedication towards exploring the sikh historical facts.

Since the beginning of Sikhism, started by the great universal master, Sahib Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji the historical facts have not been brought properly on papers. The irony that most of the historical facts have been written by the Mugals or by the British historians.

The world is still ignorant about the historical facts that are yet to be revealed to the world. Lot of herculean effort has to be exercised.

It was a great pleasure to go through the books. 'The Sikh history of Deccan' & 'The Sikh history of East India' written by you.

The contents are sensible, narrated with acumen dexterity and with awareness.

I appreciate and applaud you for your sincere efforts in bringing to light the actual facts of Sikh history.

My best wishes to you for your endeavor.

With regards

(Harpal Singh Jaggi)

National President



I am extremely pleased to note that Abinash Mahapatra a young man of age 21 years from Odisha is going to publish his books pertaining to the Sikh History of India and other countries visited by Guru Nanak Dev Ji. These books are 38 in number and the author narrates about the travels of Guru Nanak Dev Ji and the Sikh History in various places of the world in these books. The author has trammelled upon that path of History, that had long remained unravelled. Reading these unknown portion of history regarding the travels of Guru Nanak Dev Ji will take the readers to a new realm of the past and make them experience spiritual ecstasy.

Sikhism can be defined as the religion which traverses beyond superstitions and medieval belief. It focuses on the real essence of life. The author's portrayal of the travels of Guru Nanak Dev Ji and Sikh History is vivid and is an authentic depiction of the Sikh History pertaining to various portions of the globe.

I congratulate Abinash, the author for this achievement and convey my best wishes. May he carve out a niche for himself by his future works on Sikhism where his heart and soul lies.

(DR. KIRAN BEDI)

3.2.2019.

Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa

Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha)

Former Union Cabinet Minister

*President, Shikmani Akali Dal
(Democratic)*



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Dear Mr. Abinash Mahapatra,

At the tender age of 22 years, you have produced a number of books on Sikh History of different places which proves that not only you have seen life from close but also you have started attaining its extract. I can assure that your books are inclusive of facts on Sikh History to which most of the Sikh Sangat, people belonging to other religions & especially our young generation may not be aware of.

You have ensured that we should bring the history back from time and educate the Sikh Sangat for good. That in such a young age you are so passionate about the study of Sikh Religion, belief the fact that the youth of today are turning their back to Religion. The fact that a Non Punjabi, a Non Sikh felt drawn towards the study of Sikh History reflects the universalism of Sikh Religion and proves that our Sikh Gurus were a guide to the whole humanity and not only to the Sikhs.

The Sikh Gurus spoke to the Human Heart and this is how the heart of a person like you although belonging to different region, different culture, different religion and speaking different language, has adhered to their voice and could feel so touched that you devoted yourself for the study of Sikh Religion. All the geographical barriers have given way to the call of Eternal Truth that was a gift of the Sikh Gurus to the mankind.

Your books in hand are an effort to recount once again our glorious past, the travels of the Sikh Gurus and the messages they conveyed to the humanity with their Cosmic Shabad and preaching. I can assure you that your valuable works will be warmly welcomed by the Sikh Sangat and common readers as well on this 400th Birth Anniversary of our 9th Master – Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Ji.

For me, you are a promising young man and I insist you to continue your efforts to produce such valuable Sikh research works and fulfil your mission of Sikh Dharam Parchar and spread the message of unity of Godhead and mankind, which is the real essence of Sikh Religion. Great love & Best wishes for you.

With Best Wishes

Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa

ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥



ਮੁੱਖ ਦਫਤਰ
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ਜ਼ਿਲ੍ਹਾ ਫਤੇਹਗੜ੍ਹ ਸਾਹਿਬ
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Dated - 9th October 2019.

Dear Mr. Abinash Mahapatra,
Balasore, Odisha.

Fateh,

You have done a wonderful and deep research of the Sikh Faith in India and abroad. This is a brilliant exposition which no scholar can challenge.

Though I know my Sikh History very well but as far as my knowledge of Sikh theology and divinity is concerned, I have my limits. But what you have written through your research on Sikhism and travels of Guru Nanak Dev Ji and other Sikh Gurus in different parts of the globe, I do not think any other scholar can claim more knowledge than you have scripted in your research papers. You have made me wiser about Guru Sahib's travels and history prevailing in different parts of the world.

I would recommend your unique efforts to the SGPC (Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee) and other historical Gurdwaras of the Sikhs all over the globe. Currently, the Sikhs have spread out to 86 countries in this world and they should all keep these valuable manuscripts in their respective libraries.

I would also recommend your works to all the institutions that do research on Sikhism and also take pains to teach the Sikh Divinity.

I wish you all the luck and success in life and apart from this I pay my special thanks and gratitude for doing so much for propagation of the Sikh Faith and Sikh Religion.

With Regards,

Yours Sincerely,

Simranjit Singh Mann.

ਮਨਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ.ਕੇ
ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ
ਜਗ ਆਸਰਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਓਟ (ਜਾਗੋ)
ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ



MANJIT SINGH G.K
PRESIDENT
JAG AASRA GURU OTT (JAGO)
JATHEDAR SANTOKH SINGH JI

RECOGNISED RELIGIOUS PARTY UNDER SOCIETY ACT, 1860
REGISTRATION NUMBER : S 825/2016

Date: 29/08/2020

I have not met in person Mr. Abinash Mahapatra, the author of prolific literatures on Sikh History pertaining to copious portions of the globe but I have known him for a couple of months now.

Here is a young Godly man from Odisha with culture of God and India in one. His talents of writing the Sikh History is praiseworthy and excellent at his age. He has rightly been recognised and awarded by Takhat Sahibans & various Sikh organisations.

I am impressed by his perseverance, gentleness and quest for excellence in one person. His books on Sikh History is like watching a young disciple walking behind the Sikh Gurus through all the places they visited across the globe.

The author wished "to tap the hearts of the readers". He has certainly tapped my heart. He has given a vibrant account of Sikh Gurus travelling and spreading spirituality and personal fragrance and leaving behind Godly Sangat in the places they visited.

The author has spotted and has personally visited every place where the Sikh Gurus visited. He recalled and recorded the past and brought it to present - day Sikhs residing worldwide. It is a monumental work for an author in his age of 22 years.

Abinash Mahapatra has also traced the places where the Sikh Gurus had visited and Sangat was created but the places have now been lost to modern development of roads and buildings. Talking of some such places, the author bemoans,

"Unfortunately, not many memories of Guru Sahib's visit is left in this region".

The author does not only describe what he found in places and read in books but also adds his own insight as when he cites any case related to Pandits or Maulvis. The Sikh Gurus, the author writes,

"Freed people from superstitions and infructuous deeds, caste based differences and thus freeing them from the shackles of fake hermits and yogis".

I have personally liked and have been profited from the books written by Abinash Mahapatra. I hope the author continues under the guidance of Sri Akaal Takhat Sahib and make further narrations and write more books on Sikh History. Great Love and Godly blessings to the Author.

I like him as he is.

Manjit Singh G.K.

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PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA,

FORMER MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

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Former Member:

- Public Accounts Committee
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I am extremely glad to know Mr. Abinash Mahapatra, a resident of Balasore District of State – Odisha has published numerous books pertaining to the Sikh History and the countries visited by the Sikh Gurus during their Udasis. Sikhism is based on the principles of “SARBAT DA BHALLA” and laid stress on how the individual should lead his/her life and what are his/her duties towards others.

Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji travelled across the globe for nearly 24 years of His Life and gave the message of universal brotherhood. Subsequently, the succeeding Sikh Gurus themselves travelled to various parts of the globe or appointed some of their devout disciples in various portions of the globe for the propagation of Sikh Dharam Parchar and lead the entire human race in the path of the True Lord – Waheguru Ji.

The young Sikh Historian Abinash Mahapatra has given a vivid account of the Travels of the Sikh Gurus, the messages conveyed by them and the rich Sikh History pertaining to the respective region. I appreciate the efforts of the young scholar and request the readers to warmly welcome the books written by him.

I wish him all the success in life.

(PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA)

Former Member of Parliament.



Centre on Studies in Sri Guru Granth Sahib

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Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji, is the founder of Sikh Religion whose 550th birth anniversary is being celebrated all over the world with great zest and enthusiasm. Guru Sahib taught mankind how to look beyond sectarian boundaries and love the entire humanity by preaching the idea of Fatherhood of one God and universal brotherhood of mankind. His hymns emphasize on one God, the creator of the entire universe. Undoubtedly, He is one of the religious leaders of His times who travelled vastly across India and abroad. He devoted about 25 years of His lifespan in visiting various places in India and abroad. The itineraries of Guru Sahib began from Sultanpur Lodhi followed by the bestowal of the divine mission upon him. He spread His teachings in India, South Asia, Middle East and many other countries. During His journeys, He visited the main pilgrimage centres of Hinduism and Islam and met many religious leaders of different beliefs.

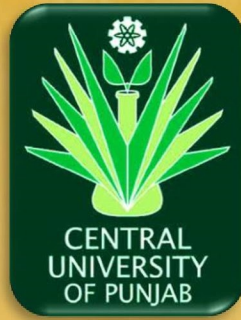
Abinash Mahapatra a young scholar from Odisha is perhaps the youngest Sikh Historian and author who is in his tender age of 21 years and has written numerous books on Sikh History relating to India and other countries. According to Janam Sakhi tradition, Guru Nanak Dev Ji came to Odisha while moving to Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and visited Jagannath Puri which is one of the 68 sacred pilgrimage places of Hinduism. Bhai Himmat Singh Ji one of the Five Beloveds of Guru Gobind Singh Ji also belongs to this state and in Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, the word "Odisse" is mentioned in the Hymns of Bhagat Kabir Ji (SGGS - 1349).

Hailing from such a divine state, the young author Abinash has taken the initiative to explore all the places visited by the Great Guru in India as well in other countries. He has tried his level best to give relevant and authenticated information about the sacred places and their present situation with the support of Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Sri Akal Takhat Sahib and other Takhat Sahibans and the respective regional Sikh Organisations and Governmental organisations of the respective regions. It is indeed an innovative attempt to pen down such literatures that will evoke great interest for further research.

It gives me immense pleasure to congratulate and appreciate Abinash for bringing out such Sikh Literatures on the occasion of 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev Ji. All my best wishes and support for him to continue more such researches on Sikh History and Philosophy.

Amarjit Singh

Dr. Amarjit Singh



Abinash Mahapatra is a young Scholar of Sikh Studies who got published 38 books at the tiny age of 22 years. He is clear in his vision of Sikh History and Culture. He knows the authentic sources of his subject and knows how to display them. A Non-Punjabi of this age doing such marvellous service in the field of letters is a miracle for me. After Dr. Himadri Banerjee and Dr. Rajmohan Gandhi, I salute the Non-Punjabi Young Scholar, Abinash Mahapatra and pray before Guru Ji to keep him under His Wings.

Dr. Harpal Singh Pannu

Date - 24/06/2020

*Professor - Guru Gobind Singh Chair,
Central University of Punjab,
Bathinda Punjab.*

*Former Dean (Research),
Chairman at Dept. of Religious Studies,
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DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
KURUKSHETRA UNIVERSITY KURUKSHETRA
HARYANA: 136 119, INDIA
(Established by the State Legislature Act XII of 1956)
("A+" Grade NAAC Accredited)

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Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra

No. History/2020/16796


Dated: 18.10.2020

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I am immensely pleased to know that Mr. Abinash Mahapatra, a resident of Balasore District of Odisha State, a young and promising scholar of aged twenty two years has published a number of books on the history of the Sikh Gurus and the history of the Sikhs in general. Based on the Sikh Religious Literature, Primary Sources, Secondary Sources as well as on the Oral History Traditions, his writings have focused on the Life, Teachings and Philosophy of the Sikh Gurus, Udasis of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and other Sikh Gurus, Establishment of the Khalsa Raj, Sikh History of various Indian States and Impacts of the Sikh Religion on the locals of the various territories visited by the Sikh Gurus across the Globe. The writings of Mr. Abinash Mahapatra have been authenticated by the Five Takhat Sahiban, and various Sikh Organizations including the Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee, Amritsar. Besides utilizing the original sources for the composition of the Sikh History, he has also penned his own observations and interpretations on the growth and impacts of the Sikhism till the contemporary period. His knowledge, perceptions and interest on the study of the Sikh Gurus and Sikh History is indeed commendable and the same have been appreciated on record by a number of Individuals and by the various Religious Organizations, Sikh and Social Organizations and Academic Institutions which include Sri Akal Takhat Sahib, Sri Amritsar Sahib, Takhat Sachkhand Sri Hazoor Sahib Ji, Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee, Amritsar, Gurudwara Management Committee Bangladesh and Centre on Studies in Sri Guru Granth Sahib, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar and many more.

Mr. Abinash Mahapatra has indeed added a significant chapter on the historiography of Sikh Gurus and the Sikh History in general and I trust that he will sustain his interest on the study of Sikh History. I am sure that the scholars and students of the history and the general readers at large will be benefited with the writings of Mr. Abinash Mahapatra.

I wish Abinash all success in life. Love and blessings to him.


Amarjit Singh
18/10/2020



Abinash Mahapatra, a young man of Odisha has taken initiative of writing Sikh history. He has written Sikh history of many States of India and other countries until now. Though himself belonging to Non-Sikh community, his Research and commendable work shows his deep love for Sikhism.

His inner desire was to explore the best in Sikh history and for this purpose he himself visited so many places to find out the historical truth in Sikh history as already written by the earlier authors.

Abinash Mahapatra has vividly described the visit of Sikh Gurus at various places & the message of Love, brotherhood and social equity spread by them to give solace to the suffering humanity.

The young author has brought out many remnants from the Udasis of Sikh Gurus related to these places with authenticity and facts which no one else has described earlier in such work. I hereby congratulate the young author & expect more and more from him in this field.

Dr. Sahib Singh Arshi.

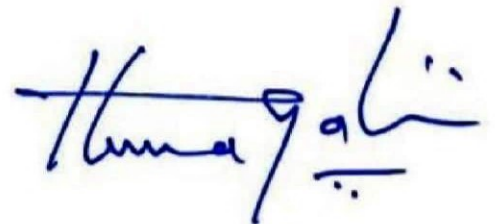
Hema Malini

Blessed is the land on which He walked, blessed are those who were His companions, blessed are the souls who felt His touch and blessed are we that we are celebrating His 550th Birthday in our life expectancy. Yes, I am speaking about Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the embodiment of Supreme Formless Lord – Waheguru Ji who descended on mother earth to break the barricades of fallacies, unfounded sacraments, anxiety, creed and casteism. He accomplished this mission by four spiritual journeys for 24 years through which He travelled across the entire globe on foot to preach “The Real Message of Lord” to the mankind.

Here, I introduce Mr. Abinash Mahapatra a meritorious student of age 21 who is presently undergoing his M.Sc. in Life Sciences at Asian Institute of Public Health, Bhubaneswar. Hailing from the land of Odisha, he is a young Sikh Historian and scholar who has written 38 books on Sikh History not only on his native state Odisha but also pertaining to various states of India and Foreign Countries. The books of Mr. Abinash have been authenticated & esteemed by Shri Akal Takhat and other Takhats, Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee Sri Amritsar, Various Govt. officials, Sikh Universities and Sikh Historians.

I appreciate Mr. Abinash Mahapatra and congratulate him for the production of such valuable Sikh Literatures on the 550th Birth Anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev Ji. I inspire him to do more such noble works in his life and convey him my best wishes for his bright and successful upcoming future.

With Best
Wishes



Hema Malini.
September 30, 2019.



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(N.B. – This book is meant for free distribution in a motive of inspiring the mankind to blend with the Magnificent Sikh History and Sikh Dharam Parchar commemorating 400th Birth Anniversary of Nauwey Patshah Jagatguru Sahib Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Ji Maharaj).

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